

Developer Forums:
Where Software
Gets Started-p. 22

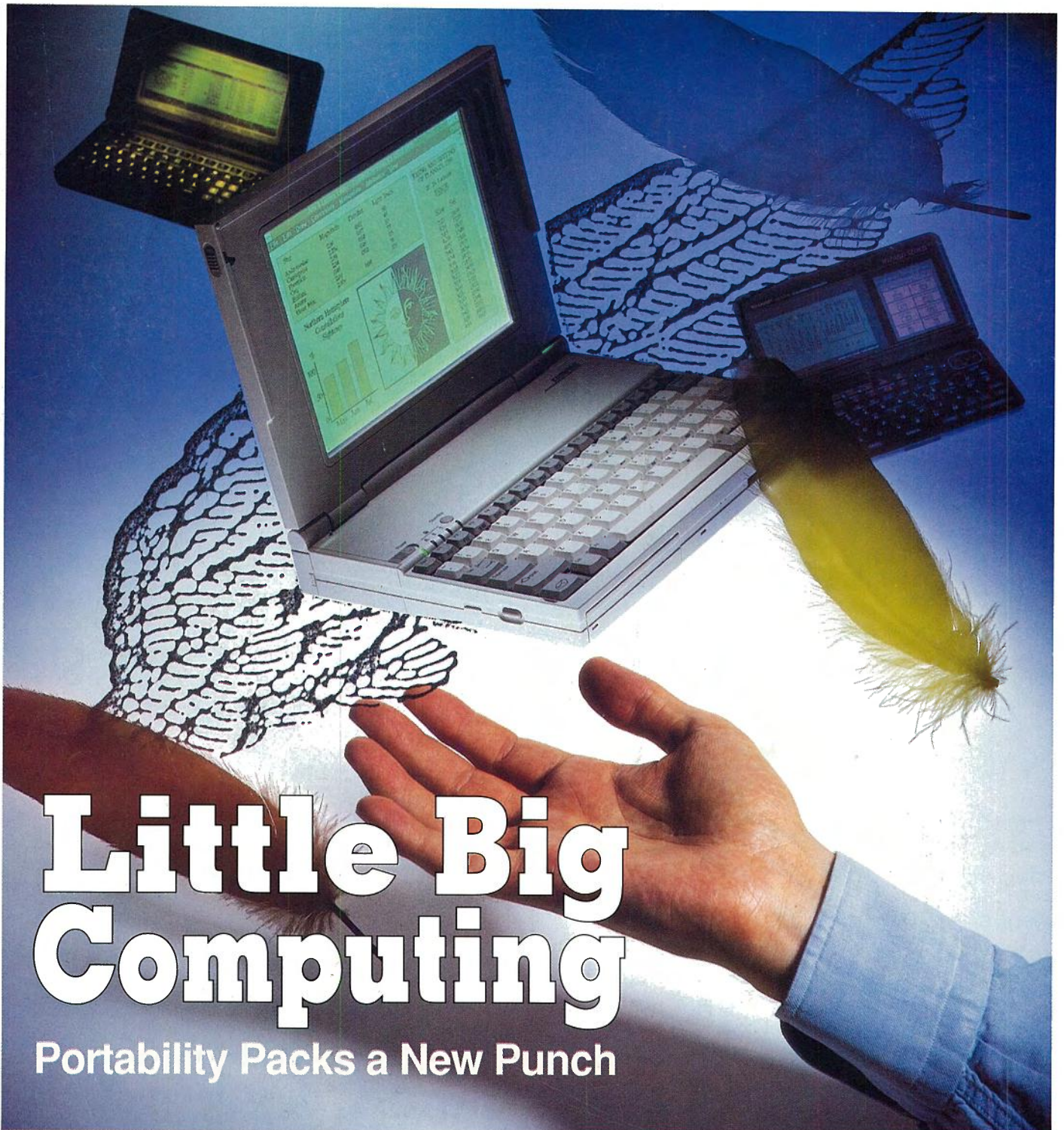
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Low Payoff-p. 28

Trying Alternative
Medicine-p. 38

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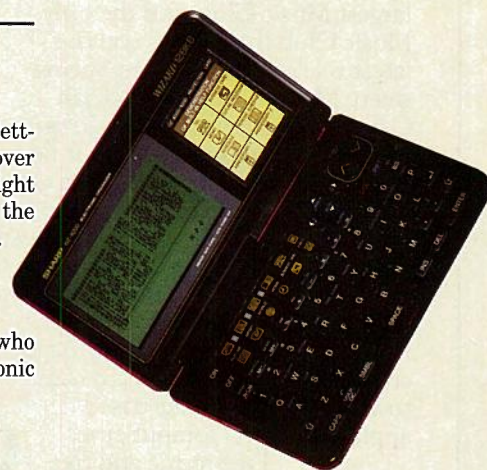
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Sick and tired of soaring U.S. medical costs and doctors' pill-and-scalpel approach, many are adopting the long view on health and taking up "alternative" therapies. Advice (and dissent, too) on treatments is being passed around online. Plus: New Age pet care; alternative uploads.

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Too Hot to Print

► Catch computer industry news as it happens, read special reports, commentary and more product reviews. You'll find it only in *Online Today*, a daily updated newspaper.

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Dear Reader

The "micro" in microcomputer is taking on a new shade of meaning as the machines we use continue to shrink while growing ever more powerful. Even some of the most diminutive machines now rival the venerable desktop in power and speed, and outpace it considerably in flexibility and utility.

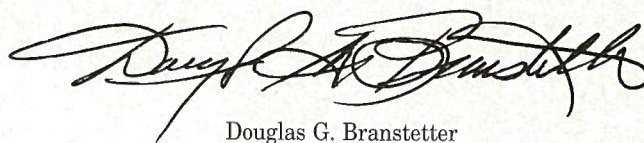
It's been exactly a year since our last survey of the "portable" world of computers—the family that includes laptops, notebooks and palmtops, and even wristwatch-size micros. Much has already changed during the past 12 months, including the rapid takeoff of Apple's popular PowerBook series, which has sparked a new flurry of support activity in the Mac-related forums. Whether you're new to small computing or a longtime laptopper, you'll find plenty of value in the forums supported by such major players as Apple, Compaq, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Toshiba, Zenith and many others. In the forums, you can get manufacturer support, expert user tips, custom laptop utility programs, advice on when and how to buy or upgrade, and even the latest product announcements and rumors.

With the phenomenal rate of growth and advancement in the laptop segment of the market, the coming year promises to be another active one in the many forums (or special sections of forums) dedicated to aficionados of the micro-microcomputer. Ergo, this year's look at small computing, "Going Portable," begins on page 10. The downloads listings—everything from travel tips to buying advice to programs that extend battery life—are on pages 16–18; a chart to help you locate forum support for your laptop and its peripherals begins on page 19.

* * *

"Alternative medicine" is one of those phrases classified as a guaranteed discussion starter. If it's a topic that carries even a modicum of controversy, as alternative medicine does, you can be sure it's a lively, if digitized, discussion in the salons of CompuServe. Broadly defined through a Western prism, "alternative medicine" is any therapy or healing practice that falls outside the boundaries of Western-style, interventionist-oriented, orthodox medicine (some of what is considered "alternative" in the West is mainstream medicine in Eastern countries). Adherents to the various therapies and healing arts, including herbalism, homeopathy, acupuncture, reflexology and many others, can be found in any forum on CompuServe where health matters are a topic. And, wherever you find proponents, you'll also find opposing viewpoints to help you balance the information load and make up your own mind about safety and efficacy.

This month's Personal Business main feature beginning on page 38 examines alternative medicine and the neighborhoods on CompuServe where you'll find information and advice on a wide variety of the healing arts. A broad range of forums, including the Health and Fitness, Cancer, Diabetes, Gardening, Human Sexuality and New Age Forums, all have discussion threads and information files on the subject.



Douglas G. Branstetter
Editor

An Un-American Tale

Thanks for a most interesting article in the June issue of *CompuServe Magazine* ("An Un-American Tale," p.8) about international users of CompuServe.

Near the end of the article there is mention of a Brazilian in Sao Paulo whose wife communicates with relatives in Praha, Czechoslovakia. Praha is the Czech name for Prague. This is akin to writing Wien for Vienna, Austria, or Firenze for Florence, Italy.

Steve Sherman
San Francisco, Calif.

The article, "An Un-American Tale," provided a much-needed perspective on the world that electronic communications has opened for us. It was interesting to get some view of how people in countries outside the United States access CompuServe.

Educators are missing a great opportunity to globalize their perspectives. I am a graduate student at a university in Indiana, and have been encouraging faculty to look to CompuServe for "global" communications. In higher education, a wide range of network services are available, but CompuServe provides the advantage of making communications easier to understand.

Richard Bothel
Indianapolis, Ind.

Screensavers

I found your article about screensavers and related utilities very interesting ("Phosphor, Schmosphor ... It's Cool!," June, p.25). Although you list PCMessage, a program that lets you leave a message on your PC screen, you neglected to list our product, Back Soon!, available in the IBM Applications Forum, Library 7, "Gen. Apps," as BKSNI0.ZIP.

Back Soon! not only allows users to leave a "bouncing" message, but also lets visitors leave a message on your PC for you to retrieve later, save to disk, or print. Back Soon! has limited security and password features and includes macros to automatically run it from inside such applications as WordPerfect and Quattro Pro.

Chuck Steenburgh
President, Tay-Jee Software
Lexington, Va.

In your enjoyable June article on screensavers, ZEUS Forum manager Rupert Goodwins says LCD screens, such as those used by the MacPortable and

PowerBooks, do not need screensavers. That may be, but there is a cdev called Backlight Control for PowerBook users that will shut off the screen's backlight in periods of inactivity. This saves battery life, so it can be considered a screensaver of sorts.

The cdev is available as BACKLI.SIT in Library 8, "PowerBook/Portables," in the Macintosh Systems Forum.

Don Weatherwax
Loomis, Calif.

Bonehead Deals

The description of "Bonehead Deals" ("Consulted Into a Corner," Monitor, June, p. 5) in the Computer Consultants Forum sounded like a discussion I found myself embroiled in. I visited the Apple Users Forum and suggested that the computer industry be held to the same standards of accountability as other businesses. I took a considerable drubbing from just about everyone there.

As a buyer of computer services, I believe the burden of responsibility to deliver usable services is with the people who make their living from the sale of such services. If consultants think things are tough now, what will they do when buyers start demanding a five-year, 50,000 hour byte-to-byte warranty? Or 100 percent satisfaction guaranteed or your money back? For every "Bonehead Deal" they regret I'll provide a counter-example of the highway robbery that seems to be an industry-wide standard. To paraphrase: An industry that has no respect for its product will have less respect for you.

T.J. Kattermann
Raleigh, N.C.

The Digital Canvas

It is rare to read a letter that is so wrong on all points as the one about "The Digital Canvas" (Letters, June, p.4).

In terms of the tactile nature of the medium, Mr. Desaulniers confuses the creation of art with its expression. It is the painter's attempt to communicate some of his or her deepest emotions to the viewer. Only a self-absorbed artist would value the physical aspects of a brush on canvas more than what it communicates.

On the issue of permanence, a revolution is in progress. Centuries ago, people learned to write music onto paper. This transformed music from an activity performed by wandering minstrels into the art of J.S. Bach and others. For the first time visual art is

being put in the same position. Instead of canvases covered in fading paint and layers of grime, art will be accessible to anyone who can understand the structure of a GIF file. It is either extreme arrogance, or extreme pessimism, to imagine that artistic expression will be lost.

Alan R. Gee
Greenwich, N.Y.

Computer Upgrades

Readers of the article "Down the Upgrade Path" in your May issue (p.10) may have gotten the misconception that the Amiga wasn't upgradable.

The Amiga was first on the market with a 50kHz accelerator over a year ago. Options are available for various speeds for 68030 and 68040 accelerators plus lower-cost alternatives such as AdSpeed, which I have, a 68020-equivalent.

Since the Amiga has more than one chip (inherent to its true multitasking capability), you can upgrade the chip RAM up to 2MB, allowing for faster manipulation of graphic and musical data. You can even run Mac programs 15 to 40 percent faster by attaching a Mac emulator to an expansion port.

Gary Goldberg
Silver Spring, Md.

Classic Computers

As someone who grew up in the 1980s, I thought your article ("Gone But Not Forgotten," May, p.18) about orphaned computers brought back a lot of memories, not all of them pleasant (i.e. shelling out nearly \$900 for a new Adam).

Eric Skovan
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Send a Letter

Send your letter to the editor by CompuServe Mail to 76004,3302. A \$25 connect credit is given to the writer of each letter published. *Sorry, we cannot acknowledge letters or answer questions through this service.* Please use CompuServe's Feedback system (GO FEEDBACK) or call 800/848-8990 for questions, problems, address changes, etc. A representative from Customer Service will be glad to help you.

MONITOR

Cinema Most Insipid

Showbiz Forum (GO SHOW-BIZ) members have been re-counting for each other the movie plot twists, acting devices and character traits they deem most "stupid." Here are some favorites:

1. Cardboard characters who talk in punchlines and wisecracks.
2. A yuppie villain who acts like a prissy maitre d'.
3. Muggers who appear out of nowhere just so the hero has someone to beat up.
4. People being chased by a car who run down the middle of the street rather than ducking safely where a car can't go.
5. People who stay in a house that is obviously plagued with murderers or ghosts (or both) rather than getting out.
6. Characters who hear a terrifying noise outside and then go out to investigate.
7. Villains who run out of bullets and throw the gun ...
8. ... and then conveniently find another one.
9. Slick guys who are supposed to be cool, but aren't.
10. Actors who act like actors acting.

Showbiz Forum members rate *Freejack*, *Tango and Cash*, *Sleeping with the Enemy*, *Showdown in Little Tokyo* and *Cobra* as favorite stupid movies.



RICHARD LILLASH

Essay Something Funny

One of the weirdest little corners of CompuServe is the Literary Forum's Section 8, "Comics and Humor," where the imagination is king (and queen and court jester). What can you say about a group of people who invented the "Word-o-Matic," a word processor that cuts through the turgid prose in everything from porn to political

speeches? Well, you might say that they're the same folks who invented the ESPizza, which can be consumed telepathically, wherever people are busy thinking. ("Do you deliver?" asked one wit. "Oh, never mind, it's already here.") GO LIT-FORUM (or hey, just imagine yourself there with anchovies).

From the Library of the Hard to Find

Book collecting is a staid, run-of-the-mill hobby. But some of the members who meet in Section 10, "Book Collecting," of the Collectibles Forum (GO COLLECT) are taking the perennial pastime to unusual lengths.

"I collect books about the Titanic," says section leader Dan Martin. "It's not the usual book collection. I think of it as sort of an anti-travel library."

That's creepy enough, but not quite as creepy as the specialty of Mark Miller. "I collect books in a very esoteric area—reptiles and amphibians," he says. "I find that the section is a good way to make connections with other book collectors. I often find leads that put

me in touch with some of the elusive titles I'm always looking for."

Donn Sanford collects books on any topic—as long as they're tiny. "I specialize in miniature books that are smaller than 3 inches tall," he says. Sanford owns more than 600 tiny books, a number of which he located through the forum. Sanford notes that one advantage of his collection is that even an extensive library doesn't take up much room.

So which section member has the most offbeat specialty? "I won't even try to describe one member's collection," says Martin. "It's really not fit for publication."



MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN

A Great Creative Effort—Give 'em a Big Hand

Suffering for one's art can involve a big gesture, such as cutting off your ear. Or it can involve something tiny, like a bunion. "Do any of you artists out there get that painful bump on your middle finger where the pencil/pen/brush handle rests?" an aspiring artist asked the pros who hang out in the Writing and Drawing section of the Comics Forum (GO COMICS). Did they ever!

Jim Massara, a professional

letterer for Marvel and other major comic houses, admitted that he still suffers from the heartbreak of finger bump—but on his fourth finger. (Massara also acknowledged that he gets finger cramps. "When that happens, I shake my hand out or just go do something else for awhile.") One former technical draftsman recommended wrapping hockey tape around the trouble spot. An architect suggested holding the pencil less

tightly, using a brush to ink over faint pencil marks, or drawing on a vertical surface. But he added that his entire drafting team had the telltale callous—could it be "the beautiful mark of a good line quality professional"?

Sysop Doug Pratt (who has a day job as an author) had yet another theory: "We writers get the same thing. I believe God puts it there for us to gnaw on."



PAUL MONTGOMERY

New U.K. Access Program; Clips Join Basic Services

The U.K. Computing Forum now has a fully working evaluation copy of TeePee (aka TP), an easy-to-use, offline reader for IBM-compatible PCs. It is available for downloading from Library 4, "Comms/TP," file TPEVAL.ZIP. The program is customized for use with CompuServe by the U.K.-based company Ashmount Research. Its features include a unique browse mode allowing reading and re-reading of messages in sequence. Support is available from the authors in the forum.

For more information on TeePee's cost and features, and to download the file, GO

UKFORUM. (The program will eventually be moved to a new forum. Watch the U.K. Forum News Flash for details.)



U.K. News Clips (GO UKNEWS) and U.K. Sports Clips (GO UKSPOR) are now included as part of CompuServe's basic services, available under the Standard Pricing plan. These daily U.K. news and sports reports are provided by Reuter World News. GO BASIC for a complete listing of areas included in basic services.

Shopping to Save Creatures Great and Small

Those concerned about animal testing will want to monitor two regularly updated files uploaded by David Lawhon to Library 14, "Animal Issues," of the Pets Forum (GO PETS). TEST.NO lists cosmetic and household product companies known not to test on animals. It also lists which products contain no animal by-products and which companies sell by mail order. Represented in the first group are Aloe Gold, Golden Lotus, Nirvana, Oxy-fresh USA, Paul Mitchell and Sparkle Glass Cleaner.

The companion file TEST-YES notes some cosmetic and household product manufacturers that do test on animals. It also lists which firms are trying to reduce the number of animals used or are seeking alternatives. Among those cited for working toward eliminating an-



imal use are Abbott Labs, American Home Products, Arm & Hammer, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Clairol, Clorox, Colgate-Palmolive, Dow Chemical, Drano, Elizabeth Arden, Fisher-Price, Gillette, Johnson & Johnson, L'Oreal, Lysol, Old Spice, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble and Schering-Plough.

Dammit, Jim, I Have No Idea What 'Stardate' Is

You can't tell the players without a scorecard," shout the vendors at the ballpark. Well, you can't tell the space travelers in *Star Trek* without the *Star Trek* Series Timeline in Library 2, "Star Trek," of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Forum (GO SCIFI).

The file (YRTIME.TXT) is based on material provided by the dialogue in the various *Star Trek* television shows and movies, as well as other documented sources. It covers the years 2166 through 2368.

Here are some highlights:

2227—Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy is born

(Georgia, United States, Earth).

2269—Enterprise begins five-year mission with James T. Kirk as captain.

2274—Enterprise returns to Earth. Kirk promoted to admiral.

2364—Enterprise-D, commanded by Jean-Luc Picard, embarks on its first voyage. (137-year-old Admiral Leonard McCoy visits briefly.)

2368—Sarek of Vulcan dies at age 202. His son, Spock, travels in secret to Romulus to stir pro-unification sentiment.

Live long and ... well, you know.

Love Affair With the Roadster Redux

Mazda's perky little roadster—the Miata—is probably the closest thing America has had to a cult car since the original Mustang. And to listen to the Miata fans who congregate in Section 15, "Miataville," of the Automobile Forum (GO CARS), it was worth the wait.

"The Miata is a classic sports car," explains member Gary Fischman. "You know, front engine, rear drive, two-seater, open-top roadster. If anything were to happen to mine, I'd replace it in a heartbeat—OK, so I'd probably change from red to black with the tan leather interior."

For Mas Kato, as with most of the section's regulars, it was love at first sight. "When I first drove a Miata, I had this grin from ear to ear that just wouldn't quit," he recalls.

Notes Stephen Schlachter, "When I was buying my Miata, the salesman thought I wasn't rich enough and tried to sell me another car. 'But if I fold that other car's roof down,' I told him, 'it'll break.'"

"It's all about fun," observes Bob Krueger, who pleads, "Please don't let anyone who works for the government see this article. If they find out that some of us are having this much fun, they'll probably make it illegal."

Kato notes, "The Miata evokes an emotional response that's hard to explain."



A Mutual Curiosity

Our insurance agent called recently saying he had a "deal" on a mutual fund my husband and I would be interested in. The agent said we would have to sign papers and commit money by 5 p.m. that day because the fund was closing, but he couldn't meet with us until 4 p.m. The prospectus he showed us looked promising, but we were a little skeptical. Before making a decision, we decided to get an unbiased opinion of the fund by checking CompuServe.

We moved the meeting into the study and accessed Fund-Watch Online (GO MONEY-MAG). In a few minutes, we had a complete and up-to-date evaluation of the fund. We were pleased to see it had a 29.9 percent return annualized at three years and an overall performance rating of 10. Fund-Watch Online showed us the same excellent growth and per-

formance record on the fund as the prospectus provided.

We signed up immediately. Our agent was able to get our application postmarked by the 5 p.m. deadline, and we have already seen a 20 percent return on our investment in just two months.

Susan Saunders
Irmo, S.C.

How to Submit Member Essays

Compete for \$50 worth of connect time and free CompuServe Information Manager software in *CompuServe Magazine's* monthly Member Essay contest. Write a 200-word essay describing an original way you've used the Information Service and send it to User ID number 76004.3302. Include your full name, address and User ID number, and watch for winning essays each month in Monitor.

Traders' Fancy: Big Stocks, Fee-Free

Investors' Forum (GO INV-FORUM) members occasionally put aside their spreadsheets and stock charts to share their fantasies. One that invariably pops up on the wish list is to be able to buy and sell stocks paying little or no commissions like the big institutions.

As investors dream of how wonderful it would be to buy Advanced Micro Devices or Glaxo Holdings without paying the piper, someone steps forward with a pleasant reminder of Spear, Rees & Co. (GO SPEAR) Trader's Advantage Program. This service enables individuals to trade in 10 widely held and volatile New York Stock Exchange issues whose past performance suggests profitable trading opportunities.

As with any good thing, there are a few catches. For instance, Spear limits transactions to a maximum of 5,000 shares. No interest is paid on cash balances awaiting reinvestment in a Trader's Advantage Account.

In addition to Glaxo and Advanced Micro Devices, other companies in the program include such household names as Reebok, RJR Nabisco, Compaq Computer and Blockbuster Entertainment.



Hit the Deck, Again and Again

They wander into the Windows New Users Forum (GO WINNEW) all the time: those poor souls who thought they were merely buying a best-selling, graphics-oriented operating system to run their business software ... and who suddenly find themselves in the grip of Solitaire Addiction.

Maybe it's because so many in the DOS community haven't had the chance to build up their gaming immunities over the years, like their *Tetris*-hardened Mac colleagues. Whatever the reason, people who only weeks ago were all business are now busily asking themselves whether Vegas is better than Standard play. And did the sunshine face on the Tropical deck really stick out its tongue when they lost the game? Before they know it, they're mainlining pixels, losing sleep, living for bonus points and courting every affliction from painful Mouse Shoulder to divorce. ("Just one more game, honey.")

Is the rapturous cascade of cards when you do finally win worth it? Or is the only answer a 52-step support group?



STEVE SKELTON

Monitor

Contributors:
Cathryn Conroy, John
Edwards, Mike Pietruk,
Lindsay Van Gelder

How to Get Familiar with the ADA Mandate

The latest piece of civil rights legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), promises to improve the lives of millions as well as to change the operations of businesses, landlords and almost anyone who engages in any form of commerce. As with any law, ignorance is no defense, so it's essential to know what ADA requires to avoid penalties and lawsuits.

The Disabilities Forum (GO DISABILITY) Section and Library 7, "Rights/Legislation," pro-

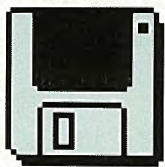
vides assistance with an extensive collection of files, many furnished by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. The legislation itself is contained in the file ADA.TXT (also available compressed as ADA5.ZIP).

Among other offerings are an ADA technical assistance manual—Title III (ADA8.ZIP), EEOC regulations under the law (ADA4.ZIP) and U.S. federal government agencies concerned with ADA (ADATEL.TXT).

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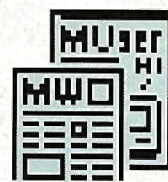
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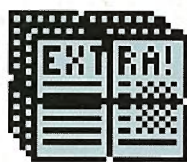
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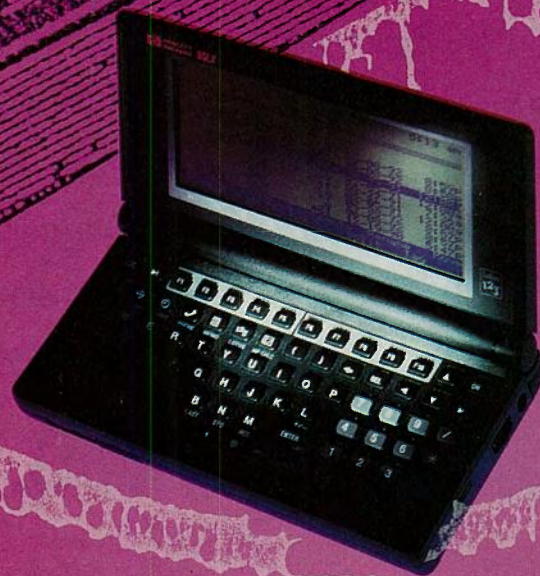
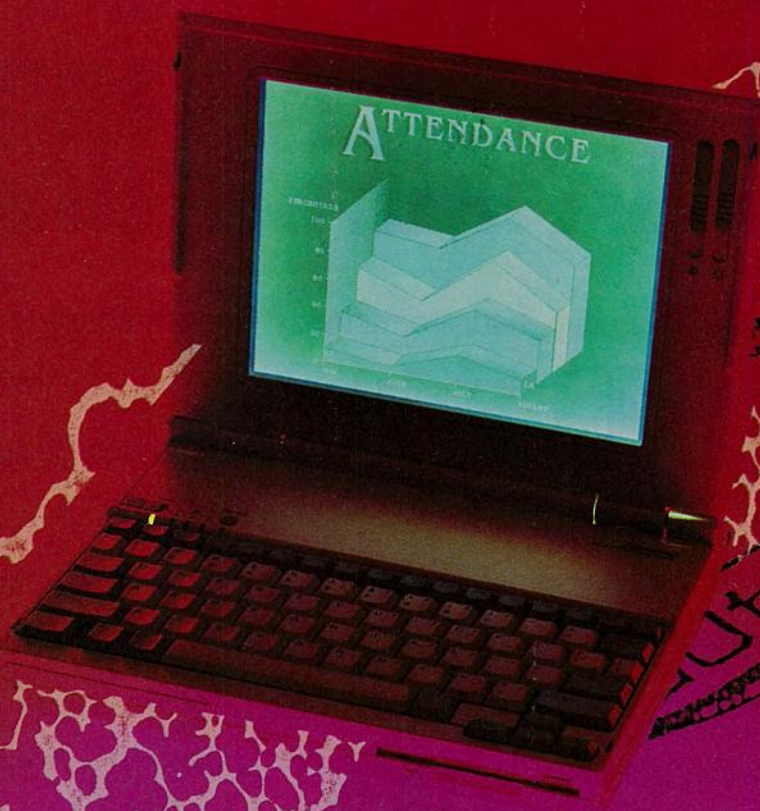
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Going Portable

FEATURE

CM's Cover Story:
The Boom in Carry-On
Computers

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Doing Data Transfer,
page 13

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Road Computing, p. 14

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Portable Support, p. 19

► **More people seem to be 'away from their desk' at the moment, as pint-sized machines grow up.**

Computers are getting smaller every year. Some machines are the size of a lunchbox, others as compact as a notebook, and still others diminutive enough to fit in the palm of your hand. The portable market is continually growing, and it seems that everyone wants to "go portable."

Whether you're a long-time laptopper or new to the portable phenomenon, you'll find yourself in good company on CompuServe. Through forums and sections for systems from such manufacturers as Toshiba, Apple, Zenith, Compaq, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Atari and dozens more, you can pick up technical tips from expert users on how to get the most out of your small computer, find custom laptop utility programs, get advice on when and how to buy or upgrade, and read about product announcements and rumors of what will soon be available.

"The rate of growth and advancement compared to the rest of the consumer electronics market is what's amazing about portables," says Jeff Hecox, managing editor of *Mobile Office* magazine, which is represented in the Consumer Electronics Forum. "We've come as far in seven to eight years as audio came in 70 to 80 years. I also think the variety of choice is unique—there's a portable for every need, whether it be just a palmtop or organizer for light computing, or a power-packed '486 for engineers or computer-aided design."

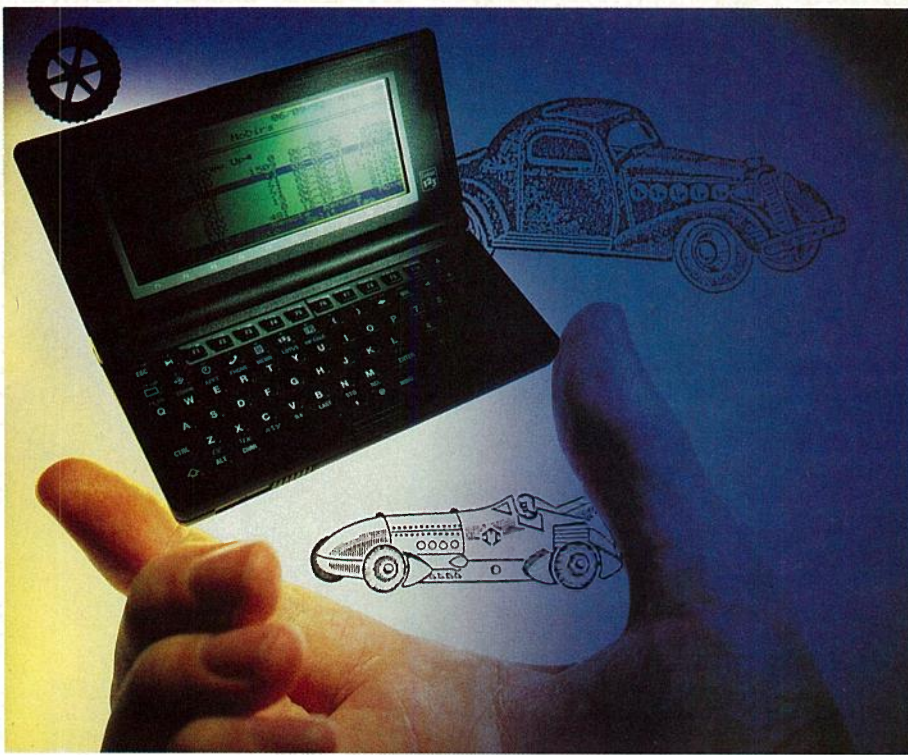
One illustration of the notebook phenomenon is the Apple PowerBook, which garnered more than 100,000 users within the first two months after its introduction in

October 1991. "With 50 to 100 messages about the PowerBook still being posted each day in the Macintosh forums, it is the longest lasting excitement I have seen in regard to the introduction of a specific Mac model," says Neil Shapiro, chief sysop of CompuServe's Apple and Macintosh forums. "Apple had portables before, but this one is really light, is ergonomically designed and has great display clarity," he adds.

After reading about the then-upcoming PowerBook in ZiffNet/Mac and CompuServe's Mac forums, Steve Jensen was more than mildly interested. "I was visiting the Mac Systems Forum daily, once the PowerBooks were announced, to get some sense of pricing and availability. I also learned what strengths and weaknesses the PowerBooks had before actually buying. For instance, it's common to have two or three 'dead' pixels on the PowerBook 170 screen." Because the PowerBook was new and much in demand, Jensen didn't find any bargain prices. But discussions in the Mac Systems Forum led him to believe that the computer would be available by December. He was motivated to look for other buying sources, and found one.

The Mac Systems Forum continued to prove useful to Jensen after he received his new PowerBook. "I stayed in the forum to see what kinds of problems others were having. A couple of forum members have written utilities to make the PowerBook more functional and fun." One of these utilities spins down the hard disk so you save on your battery and lets you know if the Caps-Lock key is on. Another provides security for when you "wake" the PowerBook from "sleep" mode by requiring a password.

A rather unusual place to find a PowerBook is at a nursing station, but as



Jensen, a registered nurse, points out, it's more than just a personal machine. "The computer sits on top of my medication cart as I do rounds and provides a database of the patients plus a reference of information on medications, nursing procedures, anatomy and physiology."

Before purchasing a PowerBook 100, Karsten Weide, editor for the Munich-based German computer weekly *Computerwoche*, frequented the PowerBook/Portables section of the Mac Systems Forum for details on various laptops, such as weight and format differences, battery life, memory and hard-disk capabilities. Weide now uses the PowerBook for "everything related to my business"—word processing, managing data, tracking appointments and to-do lists, and faxing. "Desktop computers are personal only as long as you stay at your desk," he says.

From members in the Mac Systems Forum, he has obtained help for problems with his trackball, tips on getting the most battery life out of one charge, and advice on which modem to buy. Weide chose a send/receive modem for the PowerBook and now uses CompuServe for transferring reports while traveling. He also downloads software updates from several computing forums, including the Symantec Forum where he updates his Symantec Virus-detection program to protect his PowerBook.

In the MS-DOS community, there is also a great deal of excitement over small computers. But according to John Sweney, Compaq's media relations program manager, "The physical size of the portable computer isn't going to change much—hands are not getting any smaller, and arms aren't getting any shorter and that dictates the size of the

FEATURE

keyboard and the screen." However, Sweney says there are attributes that can be changed.

The company's latest notebooks are the LTE Lite in 20 and 25 MHz versions using the SL chip sets. "We have patented technology to make the screens brighter without a larger power drain, and power management capability for 3.5 to 4 hours of continuous use. We also have CD-ROM adapters and a desktop expansion base that enables you to get two computers out of one."

If you ask Shawn V. Burns, she will tell you that a portable computer is a welcome friend to any researcher. Burns does research on health policy and philanthropic grants for a nonprofit organization interested in health care reform. "Because the materials I work with are almost entirely periodicals and reference works, they cannot leave the library. I got tired of forking over nickels to the photocopier. My other alternative was scribbling notes down, taking them home, entering them into my desktop and printing them out. My Sharp 6220 notebook computer allows me to do this at the library, eliminating that middle step."

But how about those little palmtops? Where do they fit in? Marty Mankins, editor of the palmtop newsletter *Take It with You*, says it best: "The palmtop could be considered to have evolved from pocket calculators, phone dialers and data banks." That's where some palmtop machines such as the Sharp Wizard or Casio B.O.S.S. fit in. These units come with proprietary operating systems, and feature custom software on ROM cards. Out of the box, they are geared toward address and phone number storage, scheduling, calculator and memo functions. But add software cards and they turn into spreadsheet

demons or even language translators.

Scott Campbell, product manager at Sharp Electronics, believes his company was able to focus its design efforts effectively. "The Wizard is a tool that has been designed to do a specific task: time and information management. The clear touch panel is designed so that all IC program cards have their own custom keyboard each time they are inserted. But we are most famous for the user-interface because of its simplicity, allowing you more time to manage your data rather than manage the 'machine.'"

The other type of palmtop computer is a little more flexible. Adept in the world of MS-DOS, machines such as the Poqet, the Hewlett-Packard HP95LX and the Atari Portfolio can run many of today's popular software programs including Lotus 1-2-3 and WordPerfect. The software is often available on ROM cards. Alternatively, a special transfer utility allows you to download programs from desktop to palmtop.

An important development in the evolution of the palmtop has been the formation of a Personal Computer Memory Card Industry Association standards committee. "Since all palmtops rely on RAM/ROM cards for storage, the standardized technology will allow an investment in memory and program cards to be transferred from machine to machine for those systems that support the standard—for example, the Poqet, the Sharp PC-3000 and the HP95LX," says Ron Luks, manager of the Atari Portfolio, Palmtop and Pen Technology Forums.

The idea of using a small computer as a main machine appeals to Sam Byassee, an attorney and partner with Smith Helms Mulliss & Moore in Greensboro, N.C. Byassee's HP95LX functions as a portable office, maintaining his deposition transcripts. He uses Gofer, one of his favorite laptop utilities from the Legal Forum, to compress several pages of deposition transcript onto one printed page.

Byassee has a collection of utilities from the HP Handhelds Forum and describes the forum's shareware programs for the HP95LX as "the best since the early products for the original PC." One of his utilities provides a graphical display of appointments for a week at a time on the HP. He also has "managed to figure out the mysteries of advanced use of the HP's DOS shell (SYSMGR) through help from forum discussions and text files."

Based on recommendations from fellow members in the HP forums about the benefits and time involved in upgrading a laptop, Byassee recently shipped his HP95LX off for an upgrade to 1MB of memory. "I wanted to be sure the 'week to 10 days' estimated by

Laptop to Desktop: Do the Data Shuffle

Judy Hamner, a sysop in the Palmtop Forum (GO PALMTOP) who works as Bell South's service manager for the state government in Baton Rouge, La., is famous at the office for her "toy box"—a ragged, old cardboard box full of null modem adapters, gender changers and jumpers. Hamner's collection makes her one of CompuServe's most valuable human resources when it comes to shuffling data.

Whether you're looking to swap files *en masse* between IBM PC and Macintosh, notebook and PC, palmtop and Mac, or some more arcane pairing, the forums, people and files on CompuServe can help ensure a silky transfer. Even if you don't have a commercial software package on hand, one of the shareware programs available online just might do the trick.

Things to look for in a file transfer program, notes Hamner, include highest-speed transfers, choice of serial or parallel port, and automatic creation and copy of sub-directories. The best-selling Traveling Software packages, including LapLink, supported in the Palmtop Forum, do all that and more. One much-admired shareware program is ZIP (found in various versions in the IBM Communications, Toshiba, Zenith Data and Palmtop Forums).

There are plenty of potential glitches in data transfer, according to Palmtop Sysops Hamner, Marty Mankins and Ron Luks. In serial transfers, for example, a communications port conflict might arise if your transfer program doesn't support Comm 3 and 4. Shared interrupts represent another major problem, judging from the number of help messages they inspire. "This might occur, for instance, when a mouse and a modem are jostling for use of the same comm port," Hamner explains. "When you move the mouse, the interrupt taps the program on the shoulder and makes it forget to watch



Keeper of the 'Toy Box' advises those with file transfer problems: Palmtop Forum's Hamner

for your data."

The solution: Assign devices that you seldom use simultaneously—such as a modem and file transfer cable—to the same port. Meyer adds cabling complexities, getting the program cloned, and conflicts with multitasking programs and other software to the list. Parallel transfers can be thwarted by the computer itself, since the parallel ports on some machines do not support bidirectional data flow.

Between a Mac and a DOS machine, the most likely source of trouble is the MacBinary transfer protocol, according to Mankins and Luks. The first block carries info on the file, and its presence renders the file unusable. They recommend turning off MacBinary.

Since more people are picking up palmtop machines, the sysops in the Palmtop Forum tout inexpensive card

drives for fast, painless file transfer. You just insert the palmtop's RAM card into the device and use the DOS Copy command. The files are transferred instantly. No cables are needed, and you can use your favorite disk utilities.

Forums and Files

The following forums have knowledgeable people, valuable sections, help files and file transfer shareware: Palmtop, Mac Communications, Texas Instruments, Epson, Zenith Data Systems, Hayes, Tandy Model 100, Toshiba, IBM Communications and Telecommunications. Search using the keywords FILE TRANSFER. For info on card drives, check the Palmtop Forum's Databook section. For a primer on file transfer, consult FILEXF.TXT in the Hayes Forum (GO HAYFORUM).

—Douglas W. Jackson

HP was not just an optimistic projection," he says. "It came back in exactly one week."

Although he did not enlist the help of forum members when purchasing his Casio 9500, Craig Morris spent a considerable amount of time in the Palmtop Forum after receiving his new computer. By "lurking," he picked up information about what other people were doing with their machines and what problems they encountered. After purchasing LapLink software, Morris contacted a representative from Traveling Software for help in getting his Casio to "talk" to his PC. "The problem was related to TSRs (terminate and

stay resident applications). I was able to transmit a few data records and then would receive a 'transmit error' message," he says. The Casio representative advised him to boot his PC from a diskette to have a "clean" system without memory-resident programs. After that, transfers worked fine.

A regional vice president for MacLean-Stevens Studios Inc., a New Hampshire-based company that specializes in school photography, Morris uses his Casio to "keep track of where everyone is supposed to be, where they have been, when a particular school is to be shot and who is supposed to be

there."

Fellow Palmtop Forum member Ken Ducey Jr. was debating between buying a Casio B.O.S.S. or a Sharp Wizard. Ducey sought advice in the forum and received "14 replies with comparisons and helpful suggestions." After downloading a file listing all available Wizard software cards (SOFT-LI.TXT), Ducey chose the Wizard and downloaded LOGON.THD, a text file that tells how to log on to CompuServe with the Sharp Wizard.

Says Ducey, "You simply can't boot up a laptop or notebook in a phone booth, or in

Too Many Cables and Other Hazards of Road Computing

Roving industrialist Fernando Gelbard knows what he's talking about when he says, "Where there's a phone, there's a log-on." He recently accessed CompuServe from a cruise ship in the Indian Ocean via an INMARSAT satellite. While few would care to duplicate the costly connection, anyone wishing to travel smart internationally with a small computer should listen to this mobile computing veteran.

"I send telexes, faxes, letters and e-mail every day, and I couldn't think of doing business without my computer and CompuServe," says Gelbard, who manufactures aluminum and tires in Argentina but lives in California, and whose journeys on business and for pleasure have taken him to Indonesia, Brazil, the Maldives, Czechoslovakia, India, Zimbabwe and beyond. "My office is where I am; from on board that cruise ship, for instance, I sent a string of CompuServe messages to my daughter's fax. TAPCIS let me transmit a few pages in about two minutes, so I saved lots of money."

Along with his Compaq LTE 286 and its internal Megahertz 2400 MNP modem, Gelbard carries an extra Megahertz 24/96 fax modem and a connection kit that includes a small screwdriver, a Radio Shack RJ-11 plug with spade lugs and alligator clips, and a \$5 Radio Shack phone line tester. "You can access any phone system with these tools," he says. "In countries where the phone company is a state monopoly, though, I keep the phone cable to my computer out of sight. It avoids misunderstandings."

Before he heads for a foreign destination, Gelbard takes a few crucial steps: He posts a message in the TAPCIS Forum's (GO TAPCIS) International section asking for advice from people who've been where he's going; consults his airline about any restrictions on carrying electronic devices such as computers (since terrorist incidents can cause abrupt policy changes); and avoids carrying too many cables in his carry-on luggage because "it looks bad on airport X-rays."

The accumulated wisdom gained during the millions of miles Gelbard and other intrepid CompuServe members have traveled is available for the asking. Here are some of their most valuable tips.

Before Leaving

Obtain a script-reading program such as TAPCIS, CompuServe Navigator (for Macs), AutoSIG, OzCIS or CISOP for cost-effective network access and use. Bring evidence of ownership and country of origin for your equipment, and ask online to see if you need a carnet (customs pass). See if your homeowner's insurance covers a lost or



Wayfaring entrepreneur logs on wherever he finds himself near a phone: Gelbard

damaged computer, or if you can arrange international warranty coverage through your computer's maker. Pack a list of overseas service numbers for your machine. Assemble a roadkit that will allow you to connect to virtually any phone, buy a transformer and the proper plug adapters for the countries you'll be visiting, and get a surge suppressor (available online through Home Tech Depot, GO DEPOT, and Direct Micro, GO DM) and a multivoltage charger if you don't already have one. Download the necessary access numbers, log-on scripts and initialization strings. Pack a modem with error-correcting capabilities. Finally, pack your computer and roadkit in a sturdy, inconspicuous case—and make it part of your carry-on luggage.

In Transit

Airport X-ray machines have absolutely no effect on either a computer's hard disk or diskettes, CompuServe members say. And the evidence also is overwhelming that mid-air computing does not interfere with aircraft avionics. So use your machine freely unless told to shut it off; failure to comply is illegal. And while cellular phone use is still prohibited on planes, recent message threads in the Travel Forum (GO TRAVSIG)

and other forums indicate airlines are responding to the need for inflight communications, testing onboard digital setups that include a phone, modem connection and video screen. Meanwhile, some CompuServe members have used acoustic couplers in conjunction with "sky phones" to send data, with varying success. For more tips, check the Toshiba Forum (GO TOSHIBA) for a new section called "On the Road," which is dedicated to travel issues.

After Arrival

Be prepared for various airport security checks. Have a charged battery in your machine, or a power cord and the correct adapter ready if it's an AC model; if you cannot prove your computer is a functioning one, an airport security officer may ask you to leave it behind. Machines are sometimes weighed, too, to make sure they don't contain bombs. Be careful and circumspect about hooking up to a foreign phone system, especially if tinkering is necessary. Some countries might have regulations about modem permits and use, so check online before you go. For advice about hooking up to foreign phone systems, public networks and more, see "Big-Help Uploads," p. 16.

—DWJ

DAVID SESSIONS

front of a client." For Ducey, having a palmtop means less time spent talking to his secretary and more time for clients. "All of the information I need I can download to the Wizard, and I can access it no matter where I am."

When Dave Goodman was ready to buy an HP palmtop, like Byassee, he sought expertise in the HP forums. "I got the impression, without explicitly asking, that most users were pleased with their purchase." Based on their feelings, the forum assistance and the programs in the libraries, Goodman decided to purchase an HP95LX. "Since then, I've seen expectant users asking where to get the best deal, and there was always a good response of where to go."

Goodman continues to visit the forum almost daily, to give and receive assistance. "I've recently downloaded a solitaire game and a program to automate my access to CompuServe. It's similar to TAPCIS, but written for the HP95."

As a software project manager for The Software Toolworks, Goodman has thought up numerous uses for his HP95—from keeping a household budget and to-do lists to entertaining his 5-year-old daughter with a palmtop computer game. "I already have a reputation for being a gadget freak, so whipping a computer out of my pocket just reinforces my image."

Goodman even keeps maps of his neighborhood in his HP95 "to show people where I live and work and how to get there." He uses a street atlas program on his desktop, then clips map portions and downloads them to his pocket computer. "So far, I've written an area-code program, a graphics viewer so I can view maps and pictures, a graphic program launcher, some games and a foreign language translator."

Just a decade ago, the thought of a powerful, palm-sized computer capable of these many tasks was beyond our technical expertise. Now that the technology has arrived, what does the future hold? "I see a continuing evolution. Past that, I don't see any large evolutionary steps until a real reason comes along for something different to expand the market," says Neil Shapiro. "Remember, until VisiCalc came along, there was no reason for many people to own a microcomputer."

Among other things, the near future will see a major expansion in storage media. "I can foresee palmtops that will eventually support the Sony Data Discman format, as well as the new flash storage cards," says Ron Luks. Currently under development, these cards are slightly bigger than a credit card with up to 20MB of storage.

Other developments will include improvements in LCD screen technology—backlighting and color that will run within reasonable power constraints. "Because of

the palmtop's compact size, you will see more personal-type software such as PIMs. For example, the *Physicians*

Desk Reference has been translated onto a ROM card for the Atari Portfolio and the HP95." Atari is also working on a ROM-based *City Travel Guide* for the Portfolio.

Ben Templin, product manager for ZiffNet/Mac, sees the pen-based computer as a popular vehicle in the near future. "The sound of typing is annoying and obtrusive to some people in a meeting. However, what's going to change all of that are the pen tablet computers, which enable managers to enter information as they would with a DayTimer. On the communications side, the addition of modems to handhelds such as the Wizard was a big step. Without a doubt, however, manufacturers are moving toward wireless communication with hand-held devices. Examples include dedicated devices that access a particular database, such as a policeman's ticket-writing computer that dials up the central computer to check for outstanding warrants on a driver. Cellular modems are definitely hot this year."

OK, that's reasonable, but what about the not-so-near future? What will portable computers be like at the end of the decade? "The

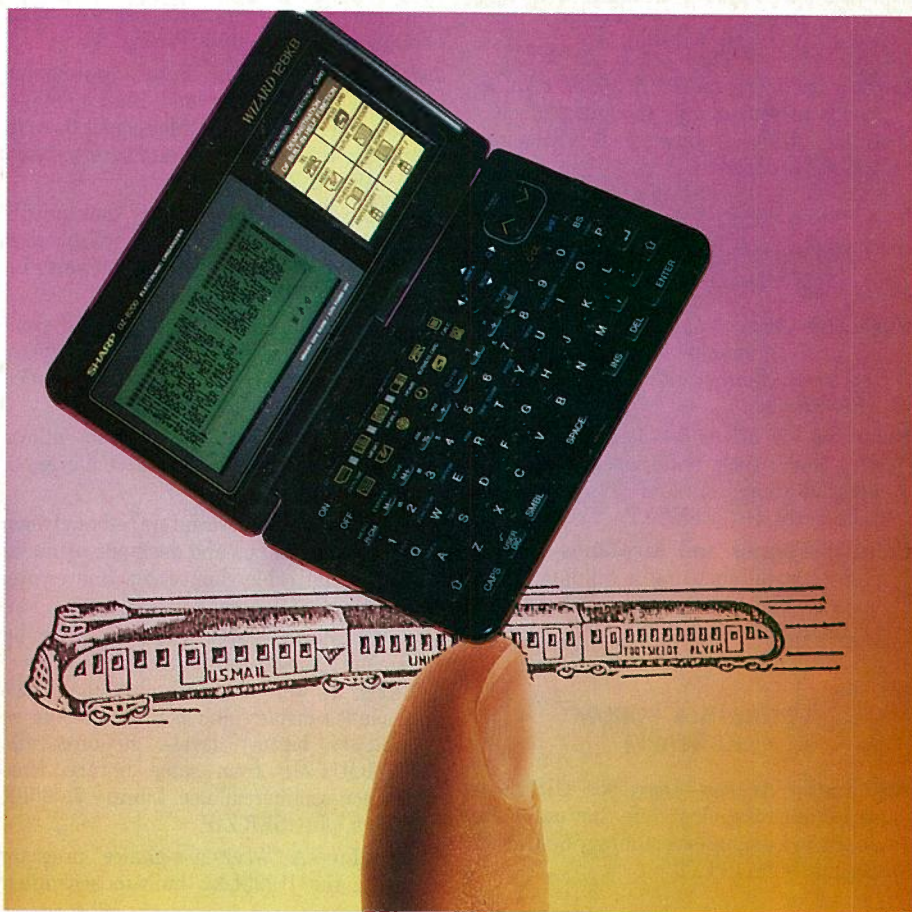
FEATURE

whole portable market is going through a fundamental change," says Paul Saffo, research fellow at the Institute

for the Future. "The '80s were the decade of the PC, but the PC is the horseless carriage of the info revolution. I think of the portable computer as an 'information appliance'—a special-purpose device. In the future, it may not look like a computer at all, and we will use it for both data and voice.

"When wireless communications come into the picture, the whole dimension is changed. Perhaps we will have machines that don't turn off, always on the alert to receive faxes and electronic mail. Voice recognition is coming faster than you think. We are on the edge of a major breakthrough, definitely within five years. Once you get rid of the keyboard, things change dramatically. Consider the following scenarios: a little display screen in your glasses, a microphone headset, and a PC and CD-ROM drive attached to your belt." An interesting concept—the "pet computer."

Dawn Gordon has written more than 350 articles for such publications as Rolling Stone, Playboy, Billboard, Stereo Review, Video, Popular Science and The New York Post. She is the manager of the Consumer Electronics Forum.



Big-Help Uploads for Small Computers

If you have a laptop, notebook or palmtop computer, you'll want to check into CompuServe's forum libraries for freeware, shareware and informational files. Here's a sampling of files recommended by sysops—everything from tips and utilities for traveling with your small computer to programs that help you log on and save battery life.

ATARI PORTFOLIO FORUM (GO APORTFOLIO)

Communications Package—A terminal package for the Portfolio with XMODEM support and 100-line scrollbar. Can run on desktop PCs as well, allowing for file transfers up to 38,400 bps. Library 2, "Communications," ACOM11.ZIP.

Text compressor/viewer—Pread version 1.1 compresses text files to half their size and inserts a built-in viewer for reading and searching them on the fly. Library 3, "Utilities," PREAD1.ZIP.

BASIC—Full-function BASIC programming language for Portfolio palmtop. Version 4.9 upgrade package. Library 8, "Programming," PB49UP.ZIP.

AVIATION FORUM (GO AVSIG)

Laptop Inspection—Short file on FAA security measures and screening of electronic devices. Library 0, "General/HELP," LAPTOP.

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS FORUM (GO CEFORUM)

Executive Travel—*Mobile Office* article on using a laptop or notebook PC on the road. Library 14, "Mobile Office," TRAVEL.TXT.

Batteries—*Mobile Office* article on battery care and which batteries are best for portable computers and cellular phones. Library 14, BATTERY.TXT.

Cellular Phones and Airplanes—*Mobile Office* article on using a cellular phone on a commercial airplane. Library 14, CELAIR.TXT.

CROSSTALK FORUM (GO XTALK)

Automated Access—Describes CISOP, a series of Crosstalk scripts that automate access to CompuServe. Library 6, "CISOP Scripts," CISOP.TXT.

HAYES FORUM (GO HAYEFORUM)

Pocket Modem—Details on a tiny 2400-baud modem designed specifically for business travelers. Requires no electrical outlet, battery pack or serial port adapter for connection. Library 1, "General Information," POCKET.TXT.

Infonet/CompuServe Access—X.25 dial-in nodes for CompuServe access via Infonet outside the United States. Library 13, "International," INF25.TXT. A TAPCIS script for Infonet 9600-baud X.25 nodes (X25SCR.TXT) and an X.25 TAPCIS script for Infonet's Database (X25DB.SCR).

HP HANDHELDS FORUM (GO HPHAND)

CompuServe Access Tips—Complete tutorial for reading CompuServe messages and downloading files using the HP95LX's built-in COMM program. Library 5, "95LX New Users," HP95LX.CIS.

Automated Access—Overview of a powerful script-reading program called AccIS for HP95LX palmtop users accessing CompuServe. Freeware. Library 6, "95LX Datacomm," ACCIS.ZIP.

Automated Access—Fully automated CompuServe forum and Mail management program called Message 1.0, written for the HP95LX. Shareware. Library 6, MESSG.ZIP.

RAM Card Backup—A utility that quickly backs up an entire memory card to a host PC's hard disk; requires no software. Library 6, CRDBAK.ZIP.

Telecommunications—Full-featured, compact, configurable, multitasker-aware telecommunications program called COMMO. Library 6, COMMO.ZIP.

COMMO Supplement—Program allows HP95LX users to use COMMO. Library 6, COMMO9.ZIP.

File Transfer—Fast serial transfer between laptops, palmtops and desktops using direct serial cable connection. Shareware. Library 6, ZIP.ZIP.

Pop-Up Menu—JagServices is a pop-up menu to all of the HP95LX's built-in functions, as well as some additional ones. Includes display and port commands as well as battery levels. Requires file TIMEOUT.ZIP from same library. Free for non-commercial use. Library 7, "95LX Users," JAGSER.ZIP.

Scheduler—A "Week-at-a-glance" program using the HP95LX's built-in scheduler.

Displays all appointments and allows reading of their titles, one week at a time. (Download APNAME.TIP from same library before installation.) Library 7, WKABK.ZIP.

Third-party Support—This zipped collection of files contains descriptions of third-party products available for HP palmtops as published in *The HP Palmtop Paper*. Includes subscription information. Library 7, 95PROD.ZIP.

IBM COMMUNICATIONS FORUM (GO IBMCOMM)

AutoSIG Enhancements—Details latest enhancements to the AutoSIG script program stored in ATOSIG.EXE. Library 2, "AutoSIG (ATO)."

Computer/Phone Connections—Tips and a travel kit for connecting your computer to phones worldwide. Library 7, "Modems/Comm Hdw," TRAVEL.ZIP.

Automated Access—Two files describing OzCIS, a powerful new script-reading program for CompuServe access, and requirements for using it. Library 9, "Script/Nav Programs," OZCIS.BRO and OZCIS.REQ.

IBM EUROPEAN USERS FORUM (GO IBMEURO)

Power Conversion Kit—Details on international power conversion kit good for Europe, North America, South America and Australia, sold by Hammacher Schlemmer. Library 4, "Hardware," PWR-SUP.COM.

TYMNET Access—How to log on through a TYMNET node. Library 5, "Communications," TYMNET.X25. List of TYMNET nodes outside the United States and Canada, TYMNET.NOD.

Computer/Phone Connection—Roadkit and hints on connecting your computer to hotel/motel phones worldwide. Library 7, "Help Files," TRAVEL.ZIP, TRAVEL.KIT.

CSCNET Access—Short discussion on using CSCNET to access CompuServe. Library 7, CSCNET.ACC.

IBM HARDWARE FORUM (GO IBMHW)

Cursor Changer—SETBLINK customizes the cursor's blink rate and shape. Uses only 684 bytes of RAM. Library 3, "Video," SETBLI.ZIP.

Cursor Highlighter—Instead of enhancing the cursor, Brightline highlights the entire line where the cursor is resting. Can be turned on and off at will. Shareware. Library 3, BL14.EXE.

Travel Kit—Roadkit for traveling with a laptop PC. Library 6, "Small Computers," TRAVEL.INF.

Airline Travel and Computers—Discussion of various problems associated with airline travel, including X-ray inspections, security checks and airborne use of equipment. ARCD file. Library 6, AIRPRT.ARC.

Carrying Cases—Thread on member preferences regarding laptop carrying cases and where to buy them. Library 6, LAPCAS.THD.

Battery Watcher—Popular 10K TSR battery gas gauge for laptops. Shareware. Library 6, LAPTOP.ZIP.

Battery Monitor—NiCad 1.0 is a memory-resident program to track laptop battery use; provides visual bar graph of charge. Includes battery management features such as deep discharge, as well as alarms, clocks and other features. Shareware. Library 6, NICD10.ZIP.

MACINTOSH COMMUNICATIONS FORUM (GO MACCOMM)

File Transfer—Text input from other computers or a modem via the modem port; automatic operations; devised for inexperienced users. Library 4, "Comm Progs/Utils," MACLOA.SIT.

Bidirectional Transfer—The latest version of a file transfer and chat program. Freeware. Requires StuffIt Classic/Deluxe to decompress. Library 4, MULTIX.SDL.

Telecommunications—Terminal program that supports MacBinary, text, XMODEM, CRC, capture to disk and more. Freeware. StuffIt needed. Library 4, GREAT.SIT.

Mac to Laptop—Describes how to hook up a laptop directly to a Mac, including info on power considerations. Library 5, "Hardware," LAPTOP.MAC.

Access Information—Explains some of the hurdles involved in accessing networks worldwide. Library 5, WRLDMO.TXT.

Mac-Model 100 Transfers—How to transfer files between a Mac and a Tandy Model 100 without modifying cables. Library 5, 100MAC.BIN.

High-speed File Exchange Program—MacChuck puts a PC into a Mac window environment. Demo. Library 8, "Talking to PCs," GETMAC.COM.

Mac-IBM Transfer—Describes a procedure for remote file transfer between Macs and IBM compatibles, using Red Ryder 10.3 host procedure. Library 8, MAC-DO.TXT.

MACINTOSH SYSTEMS FORUM (GO MACSYS)

Utilities—Two small PowerBook/Portable utilities: SpinD is an FKey that will spin down your internal hard drive, and SafeSleep is a System Extension (init) that password-protects your PowerBook when it awakes from sleeping. Freeware. Library 8, "PowerBook/Portables," PBTOOL.CBT.

Cursor Enhancer—CursorFixer 1.0 is a system extension (init) that enhances the cursor for easier viewing. Library 8, CRSFIX.SIT.

Sleeping Aid—PowerSleep will put a PowerBook/Portable to sleep immediately to save battery life. Library 8, PWRSPL.CPT.

PALMTOP FORUM (GO PALMTOPI)

Program Compressor—PKLITE 1.13 compresses program files (COM, EXE) up to 50 percent. They run normally, but take up less memory. Valuable for palmtops such as Atari Portfolio, HP95LX and Poquet PC. Shareware. Library 2, "Poquet Computers," PKL113.EXE.

Communications Backup—A freeware program called MacWiz for communications and data backup between the Sharp Wizard and Macs. Library 3, "Sharp Wizard," MACWIZ.CPT.

Wizard/Windows—WizLink for Windows lets Sharp Wizard owners share information with Microsoft Windows. Includes conversions and editing for Windows Calendar and Cardfile applications. Supports 8600 series Wizard. Library 3, WLW20A.EXE.

Third-Party Products—List of third-party products available for Sharp Wizard and ZQ Electronic Organizers. Uploaded by Wizard Product Manager Scott Campbell. Library 3, 3RDWIZ.TXT.

Wizard Tricks—Thread on operating tips and tricks for the Sharp Wizard organizers. Library 3, TRICKS.THD.

File Transfer—Wizlink program provides full backup and archiving for 8600 model Wizard, as well as editing and conversions for SideKick 2.0 and more. Library 3, WL23.EXE.

File Transfer—Shareware Macintosh program called CasioTalk 1.1 for file swapping between Macs and the Casio B.O.S.S. Library 4, "Casio B.O.S.S.," CASIOT.SIT.

B.O.S.S. Tricks—Thread on operating system tips and tricks for the Casio B.O.S.S. organizers. Library 4, BOSS1.THR.

TAPCIS Use—Messages on using TAPCIS on the Poquet computer. Library 13, "Communications," TAPCIS.THR.

Data Transfer—The basics of HP95LX connectivity to Macs for data transfer. Library 13, HP2MAC.TXT.

File Transfer—ZIP, a fast serial file transfer program, requires a null modem cable. For IBM PC compatibles; also works on the Poquet. Offers several new options and improvements and runs on the HP95LX palmtop. Library 13, ZIP145.ZIP and ZIP151.ZIP.

Trip Organizer—Describes TravelWare, which tracks trip details. Shareware. Library 14, "Software Applications," TW13.EXE.

Palmtop Reviews—Issues 1 and 2 of *Palm to Palm*, a newsletter with reviews of different palmtops and their specifications. Library 15, "News/Reviews/Shows," P2P 01.NWS and P2P 02.NWS.

TANDY MODEL 100 FORUM (GO M100SIG)

Telecommunications—Expert tips on telecommunications on the road, including how to use CompuServe's personal file area for data storage. Library 3, "Telcom," COMQQQ.THD.

File Transfer—A 9600/19200-baud file transfer utility for MS-DOS computers and Tandy-class laptops. Library 3, LAPTAP.EXE.

Mac-to-Tandy Transfers—Describes two files on Mac-to-Tandy file transfer via WPDUET. Library 3, FILETR.MAC.

M100/102-Mac Transfers—A thread discussing data swapping between M100/102 machines and a Mac; info on cables, useful software and more. Library 3, LAPMAC.THD.

Auto Access—The Model 100's version of TAPCIS. Processes CompuServe forum messages and mail offline to reduce online charges. Library 3, EM8410.100.

Terminal—Basic communications enhanced with XMODEM, external device support, online macros, split screen, access to TEXT and BASIC. Library 3, XMDPW6.100.

Memory Utility—Operating system enhancement for the Tandy 200 that improves memory handling and the operation of the internal applications. Library 10, "Tandy 200," XOS-C.200.

File Manager—Tandy portable disk drive manager with ability to compress and combine RAM files to disk. Works with Model 100/200. Library 10, PAKDOS.200.

TAPCIS FORUM (GO TAPCIS)

Data Protection—A short course in laptop data security measures. Library 2, "Scripts and Tools," SECURE.ZIP.

Phone Lists/Scripts—A utility for managing multiple phone lists and scripts for CompuServe access. Shareware. Library 2, TAPPAR.ZIP.

Road Computing Atlas—Japan Airlines pilot John Deakin's informative guide to traveling with a computer. Covers hotel phones, roadkits, X-rays, electrical power and more. Library 3, "Modem/HW/OS," LAPTOP.ARC.

Roadkit—All about cords, connectors and how to use them to connect your modem. Library 3, TRAVEL.KIT.

Japan Access—Thrifty tips on accessing CompuServe from Japan, with a complete phone list for various methods of access. Library 6, "International," JAPAN.DOC.

Import Notes—Notes from H.M. Customs and Excise on temporary import of a computer into Europe. Library 6, LAPDTY.UK.

Infonet Nodes—A TAPCIS 5.4 script and non-U.S. nodes for accessing Infonet. Note: Regularly updated, so file name may change. Library 6, INFO4.ZIP.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FORUM (GO TELECOM)

E-mail System—Describes a comprehensive e-mail system, including full range of tools and utilities, password security and mail storage. Library 6, "E-Mail/Fax," SEE-ML.NEW.

TOSHIBA FORUM (GO TOSHIBA)

Cursor Enhancer—Strobe 1.0 changes the standard blinking cursor into a more visible inverted block. Includes customized blink rate/color. Lotus 1-2-3 compatible. Uses 1.5K of RAM. Shareware. Library 2, "Toshiba Utilities," STRB10.ZIP.

T100SE Speedups—A tiny, nonresident program that speeds up memory accesses to make your laptop run 8 percent to 9 percent faster. Designed for T1000SE, but may work on others. Includes documentation and demo. Shareware. Library 2, FASTSE.ZIP.

Backlit Toggle—BACKLITE conserves battery life by toggling on or off the backlighting on the SE screen. TSR program for 3.5K. Shareware. Library 2, BACKLI.ZIP.

Battery Monitor—Gas Gauge watches your laptop's battery life, letting you know when the end is near. Also enhances cursor. Shareware. Library 2, GAS50.ZIP.

MNP Modems—Informative thread on the advantages (and occasional disadvantages) of MNP modems. Library 4, "Text Files," MNP.TXT.

Communications—Tiny program (less than 30K with PKLITE) with XMODEM, YMODEM and ZMODEM; host mode; dialing directory. Library 5, "Other Utilities," LYNC20.ZIP.

File Transfer—Shareware file transfer program called XPORT. Library 5, XPORT1.ZIP.

Text Editor—A small (56K) but full-featured text editor/word processor. Handles multiple files, automatic formatting, macros, menus and extensive customization features. Works well on laptops; includes special installation for HP95LX palmtop's 60-column screen. Shareware, with registration optional. Library 5, VDE162.ZIP.

TRAVEL FORUM (GO TRAVSIG)

Roadkit/Connections—Tools and procedures for hooking up a laptop to a hotel telephone. Library 0, "General Interest," TRAVEL.KIT.

Road Computing Pitfalls—Story on how to avoid trouble when traveling with a laptop. Library 0, OVRSEA.TXT.

Cellular Phones—File on cellular phone operation and services available in 55 countries, including info on bilateral agreements. Library 0, CELPHN.TXT.

Luggage—Thread on best luggage options for laptop computers. Library 0, LUGAGE.THD.

U.K. COMPUTING FORUM (GO UKFORUM)

Laptop Travel in the U.K.—Informative thread on mobile computing in Britain, including details on electrical connections and good shops for equipment. Library 14, "Travel Info," UKLAP.TXT.

ZENITH DATA SYSTEMS (GO ZENITH)

Laptop Travel—Press release from the Association for Computer Training. Includes a free report on traveling with a computer. Library 2, "Help & Information," ACTS.PRS.

Laptop Travel in Europe—Useful info on traveling in Britain and other parts of Europe with your laptop. Library 2, BRITHO.ZIP, TRVUK.ZIP, UKLAPT.ZIP.

Stacker Instructions—Tips on compressing a hard drive with Stacker, using the Zenith MinisPort as an example. Library 2, STACMS.ZIP.

LAN Networking—Shareware LAN program called EasyNet; can link IBM-compatible computers such as a laptop and a desktop using a null modem cable. Library 5, "DOS Utilities," ESLNET.ARC.

Voltage Converters—Using voltage converters abroad for laptops. Library 11, "Hardware," VLTCNV.ZIP.

ROM BIOS Versions—Version numbers and dates of the ROM BIOS chips in Zenith Data Systems as of May 1991. ASCII. Library 11, ROMS.INF.

ZIFFNET LIBRARY (GO ZNT:SOFTLIB)

Laptop Utility Collection—A collection of 12 *PC Magazine* utilities that simplify portable computing. (Each appears on the disk given with the new Ziff-Davis Press book *PC Magazine's Guide to Notebook and Laptop Computers* by Bill Howard.) Library 3, "PC Magazine," LAPTOP.ZIP.

Notebook/Laptop Guide—A *PC WEEK* Buyers' Guide chart in dBase DBF format with product specifications on 21 products. Library 5, "PC WEEK," LA0-820.COM.

—Andrew Rathbone and
Douglas W. Jackson

Where You'll Find Support for Portables and Peripherals

SMALL COMPUTERS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND	SMALL COMPUTERS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND
APPLE COMPUTER Macintosh Portable, PowerBook Although it's one of the newest message areas, the PowerBook section gathers the most message traffic in the forum.	Macintosh Systems (GO MACSYS), Section and Library 8, "PowerBook/Portables"	KYOCERA ELECTRONICS KYO-85 Some of the thousands of Tandy Model 100 files in the forum libraries can be modified to run on the older Kyo-85 portable.	Tandy Model 100 (GO M100SIG), Section and Library 12, "NEC/Olivetti/Kyo85"
ATARI COMPUTER Atari Portfolio, Stacy Laptop The Atari Portfolio Forum popularized the "wish list" concept. Portfolio users describe the programs they need in Section 17, and member programmers develop them. The libraries contain more than 700 files, many written through the "wish list."	Atari Portfolio (GO APORTFOLIO); Atari Productivity (GO ATARIPRO)	LEADING EDGE D/LT series, N3/SX The forum's libraries contain several miscellaneous files specific to Leading Edge portables.	IBM Hardware (GO IBMHW), Section and Library 6, "Small Computers"
AMSTRAD Amstrad PPC 512, Amstrad PPC 640 An older laptop, the Amstrad receives the most support in the Computer Club Forum, where owners swap information and files dealing with older computers.	IBM Hardware (GO IBMHW), Section and Library 6, "Small Computers"; Computer Club (GO CLUB), Section and Library 13, "Amstrad," and Section and Library 17, "Laptops/Portables"	NEC AMERICA ProSpeed series, UltraLite series, PowerMate series, NEC 9201A laptop, NEC Starlet series A key player in the portable computer market, NEC's older laptops receive user support in the Tandy Model 100 and CP/M Forums. The IBM Hardware Forum's libraries carry several files specific to NEC's newer portables.	IBM Hardware (GO IBMHW), Section and Library 6, "Small Computers"; Tandy Model 100 (GO M100SIG), Section and Library 12, "NEC/Olivetti/Kyo-85"; CP/M (GO CPM), Library 2, "General CP/M Files"
CASIO Casio B.O.S.S. The Casio Business Organizer Scheduling System, a pocket organizer, has moved to the new Palmtop Forum, although the Consumer Electronics Forum libraries still contain some B.O.S.S. files.	Palmtop (GO PALMTOP), Section and Library 4, "Casio B.O.S.S."; Consumer Electronics (GO CEFORUM), Section and Library 14, "Mobile Office"	NORTHGATE COMPUTER Slimlite Northgate representatives are available to discuss specifics of Northgate products.	PC Vendor A (GO NORTHGATE), Section and Library 10, "Northgate"
COMPAQ Compaq LTE series, Compaq SLT series, Portable III The forum contains several utilities designed specifically for Compaq machines.	Compaq (GO COMPAQ)	OLIVETTI Olivetti M10 One of several older laptops, the Olivetti still brings a few owners to the Tandy Model 100 Forum.	Tandy Model 100 (GO M100SIG), Section and Library 12, "NEC/Olivetti/Kyo85"
DELL COMPUTER Dell System 212N, System 316 LT, System 320 LT, System 320N Dell's popular 320N notebook draws considerable attention in this busy forum's message sections.	Dell (GO DELL) Section and Library 1, "Dell Computer"	OUTBOUND SYSTEMS Outbound Laptop A "clone" Macintosh laptop, the Outbound is supported in the Macintosh Systems Forum.	Macintosh Systems (GO MACSYS), Section and Library 8, "PowerBook/Portables"
IBM IBM PS/2 L40SX N51 series, CL57 SX The forum's libraries contain descriptions of several of IBM's new laptop computers.	IBM Hardware (GO IBMHW), Section and Library 6, "Small Computers"	POQET Poquet PC The Palmtop Forum supports the Poquet PC, the smallest IBM compatible with a standard 80-column by 24-line display.	Palmtop (GO PALMTOP), Section and Library 2, "Poquet Computers"
EPSON AMERICA Equity LT Series, Geneva Epson's laptop support files date back to 1984 for its venerable Geneva PX8 portable.	Epson (GO EPSON)	PSION MC 200, MC 400, MC 600, Organiser II The Psion line of portables draws considerable crowds in the new Palmtop Forum, where factory representatives answer questions.	Palmtop (GO PALMTOP), Section and Library 7, "Psion Inc."; Consumer Electronics (GO CEFORUM), Section and Library 14, "Mobile Office"
HEWLETT-PACKARD 110 Portable, Portable Plus, Vectra CS Portable, Vectra LS/12, 95LX Palmtop The hot new HP95LX palmtop as well as HP calculators are supported in various sections and libraries of this new forum.	Hewlett-Packard Handhelds (GO HPHAND)	SANYO MBC laptop series In the Computer Club Forum, members provide advice about the Sanyo portables they've been using since 1984.	Computer Club (GO CLUB), Section and Library 2, "Sanyo," and Section and Library 17, "Laptops and Portables"

SMALL COMPUTERS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND
SHARP ELECTRONICS Sharp Wizard series The best-selling personal organizer by a long shot, the Wizard draws the largest crowds in the Palmtop Forum.	Palmtop (GO PALMTOP), Section and Library 3, "Sharp Wizard"; Consumer Electronics (GO CEFORUM), Section and Library 14, "Mobile Office"
TANDY Tandy 80286, models 100, 102, 200, 600; 1100 FD; 1400 series; 2800 FD; 2810 HD; 1500 HD; 1400 LT Owners of Tandy's Model 100 series of portables can choose from more than 4,000 files in the Model 100 Forum. Tandy's DOS-based laptops are discussed in the IBM Hardware Forum.	Tandy Model 100 (GO M100SIG); IBM Hardware (GO IBMHW), Section and Library 6, "Small Computers"
TEXAS INSTRUMENTS Travelmate series The Texas Instruments Forum, home to the venerable TI 99 computer, now attracts considerable crowds for TI's Travelmate series of laptops.	Texas Instruments (GO TIFORUM), Section 7, "TI Laptops and Lasers"
TOSHIBA AMERICA T1000 series, T1200 series, T1600 series, T2000SX series, T3200 series, T5100/100, T5200 series The Toshiba Forum includes separate sections discussing the company's portables, batteries and peripherals.	Toshiba (GO TOSHIBA)
ZENITH MinisPort series, SlimsPort series, SupersPort series, TurbosPort 386e Although Zenith makes desktop systems as well, its Portables section draws the most message traffic.	Zenith Data Systems (GO ZENITH), Section 2, "Portables"

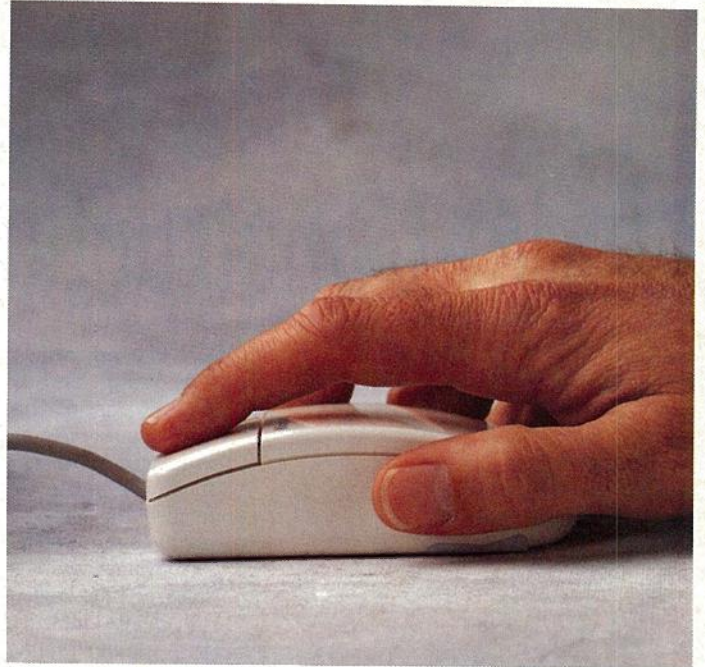
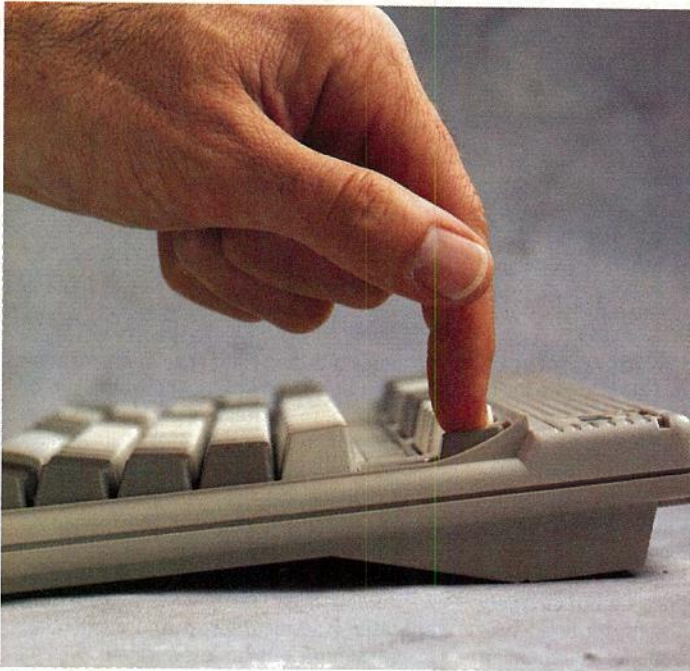
PRINTERS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND
CANNON Bubble-Jet Printer BJ-10e	Canon Support (GO CANON)
HEWLETT-PACKARD Thinkjet Model 225	HP Peripherals (GO HPPER)

PERIPHERALS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND
DATASTORM TECHNOLOGIES Hot Wire file transfer utility	Datastorm (GO DATASTORM), Section and Library 6, "Hot Wire"
MEGAHERTZ Laptop products including LAN cards, memory upgrades and emulation cards	PC Vendor C (GO PCVENC), Section and Library 9, "Megahertz"
RUPP Fastlynx file transfer, Fastlynx LapPack	PC Vendor C (GO PCVENC), Section and Library 10, "Rupp Corp."
TANDY Tandy Portable Disk Drive	Tandy Model 100 (GO M100SIG)
TRAVELING SOFTWARE LapLink (file transfer), PC-Link Plus, Battery Watch Pro (pop-up battery monitor), WinConnect (drive redirector)	Palmtop (GO PALMTOP)

MODEMS	FORUM AND GO COMMAND
APPLE COMPUTER Macintosh Portable Data Modem 2400	Macintosh Systems (GO MACSYS), Section and Library 8, "PowerBook/Portables"
HAYES Pocket Modem 2400 The Online with Hayes area contains information about Hayes products. The Hayes Forum contains sections and libraries for Hayes users.	Online with Hayes (GO HAYES); Hayes (GO HAYFORUM)
MEGAHERTZ EasyTalk Modem Series	PC Vendor C (GO PCVENC), Section and Library 9, "Megahertz"
PRACTICAL PERIPHERALS Practical Pocket Modem, Standard 2400 Modem PM 2400LT, MNP Level 5 Modem PM 2400LT, Sendfax Modem 2400LT	Practical Peripherals (GO PPIFORUM)

ONLINE BUYING SOURCES	STORE AND GO COMMAND
For Apple portables:	Boston Computer Exchange (GO BCE); Mac Zone/PC Zone (GO MZ); Mac-Warehouse (GO MW)
For IBM-compatible portables:	Home Tech Depot (GO HT); Micro-Warehouse (GO MCW); PC Catalog (GO PCA); Sears (GO SR); The Computer Store (GO TCS)

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Under-Constructionware

▶ **Within online developer forums, design and upkeep of programs is all part of the daily subroutine.**

CompuServe's developer forums are an interesting form of symbiosis that benefits those who write the programs, those who furnish the tools and those who bring the products to market.

Developers who might potentially see the sales of their own product diminish freely share information with others. Programmers upload code for comment in much the same way that an academic researcher might subject his or her work to peer review. Forum members share and evaluate product ideas, discuss and remove roadblocks, and even debate the merits of competitive products on product-specific forums.

Some products are conceived, tested and distributed over CompuServe, either existing solely as shareware or ultimately becoming distributed through commercial channels. For example, practically every Macintosh user on CompuServe is familiar with Navigator, a program that helps users traverse the forums, but few are aware that the program started as an idea posted in the Macintosh Communications Forum.

Developer Mike O'Connor, who works from his home in Long Island, N.Y., conceived and nurtured the idea of Navigator through CompuServe, first turning it into a highly successful shareware program, and then into a product sold by CompuServe. It is so successful that Navigator is now O'Connor's main source of income. He says, "I get virtually all my ideas for its new features directly from user suggestions posted in the Navigator Support Forum, the Mac Developers Forum and lots of others." O'Connor finds the forums to be great places to get feedback and to find help for programming problems.

Hank Marquis of Bridgewater, N.J., relied heavily on CompuServe in developing his program, Visual/db. When Visual BASIC

first came out, he began developing Windows software and frequenting the Microsoft BASIC Forum to contact other programmers with similar interests. Marquis says, "I needed a toolkit of routines for handling files under Visual BASIC, and so I searched through CompuServe. Usually I find what I need, but this time I didn't, so I began to develop it myself."

The messages he posted on the forum generated a lot of interest and suggestions. He put samples of his product out for comment, and ended up doing alpha- and beta-tests over CompuServe, which greatly reduced the development interval. "I can get a comment from a tester, make the change and e-mail the revision all in the same day," Marquis says.

Some companies not only do beta-testing but also offer direct developer support on CompuServe. One of these is Microsoft, which recently organized a complete developer support area (see "Microsoft's Aid to Windows-Making," p. 25). But you don't have to be a company the size of Microsoft to offer support on CompuServe. OBJECTive Software of San Diego, Calif., develops and publishes object-oriented programmer tools for the Clipper Development System. The company maintains contact with some clients over the *Data Based Advisor* and Nantucket Forums.

Company President Clesson Duke recalls a case in which a Clipper programmer in Australia encountered a problem using OBJECTive's Viewit, an object-oriented power browser for Clipper. The goal was to tie authors and book titles together so that when the author's name was highlighted in one window, his or her books were displayed in the title window. Duke requested that the programmer send source code, sample records and an explanation of the desired result via CompuServe Mail. OBJECTive programmers rewrote a 35-line program and sent it via e-mail to Australia, accomplishing in a few days what would have taken weeks by mail.

Duke has also provided support to a local

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▼
Software's Breeding Grounds

▼
Developer Services, page 24

One Big Toolbox: Developer Forums' Files

Hundreds of files are tucked away in the libraries of the developer forums. You'll find shareware, freeware, demonstration programs, vendor information and press releases. The following is a potpourri of such files:

BORLAND DBASE FORUM (GO DBASE)

Create Charts—Create bar, line or pie charts from a DBF file. Allows user-selectable colors and bar styles. Library 4, "dBase IV," TGRAPH.ZIP (58,811 bytes).

BORLAND PROGRAMMING FORUM A (GO BPROGA)

Macro Handler—A shareware Turbo Vision Event Macro Handler that allows the recording and playback of keyboard and mouse events. Macros also can record the playback of other macros. Library 1, "Object Oriented Programming," MACROS.ZIP (17,645 bytes).

DATA BASED ADVISOR FORUM (GO DBA)

Fast File Insert Utility—This freeware utility inserts a block of information such as

a copyright into several of your program files in a directory. Library 1, "News & General Information," RAWINS.ZIP (9,918 bytes).

IBM OS/2 DEVELOPERS FORUM (GO OS2DEV)

OS/2.0 Print File Utility—This 32-bit program prints out an ASCII file in a format useful to programmers. Provides a header with the file name, date and time, and more. Library 11, "Other Dev. Tools," PF.ZIP (35,608 bytes).

INTEL ACCESS FORUM (GO INTELACCESS)

Performance Documented—Reports document the performance of the 50 MHZ Intel '486 DX Microprocessor. Benchmarks give a standard measure of performance that can be used to predict how well application code will execute. Library 6, "i486 CPU Family," 486_50.ZIP (45,181 bytes).

MACINTOSH DEVELOPERS FORUM (GO MACDEV)

Fold Machine 3.3—A tool to compare two folders full of text files or two resource

files. Produces a list of the differences. Unrestricted demo version. Library 13, "Tools/Debuggers," FM33.SEA (126,720 bytes).

MS WINDOWS SDK FORUM (GO WINSKD)

Finder—Provides easy swapping between windows, and continuous display of time and free memory. Library 3, "Public Utilities," FINDER.ZIP (24,628 bytes).

ORACLE FORUM (GO ORACLE)

OraUnload—A shareware utility for unloading data in Oracle tables to external operating system files. File formats include fixed field ASCII, comma delimited ASCII, and dBase III formats. Library 1, "General Library," ORAUNL.ZIP (96,549 bytes).

PORTABLE PROGRAMMING FORUM (GO CODEPORT)

C Style and Portability Guidelines—Collection of files describing coding and portability standards for C programmers and programming in general. Library 9, "C Language," CSTYLE.ARC (140,216 bytes).

San Diego company, receiving code via e-mail and returning it with corrections in less time than it would have taken to drive the 40 miles between offices.

If you're programming in a high-level language such as C, Pascal, BASIC, APL or Forth, you can find a forum where developers of like interests congregate. Most of the major database management system packages, such as dBase, Fox, Revelation and Oracle, are supported by the vendors in a forum. Some support comes directly from vendors, but much of it is from fellow developers who enjoy the challenge of helping someone solve a perplexing problem.

David Rosenthal, who works out of his home in Sedona, Ariz., posed this question in the Revelation Forum: "When designing a report that has both a complex sort and some reduction criteria, what's the fastest way to generate the select list?" A thread of more than a dozen messages ensued as other developers offered opinions.

Rosenthal, who makes his living programming in Revelation, checks into the forum regularly. He says, "Before the Revelation Forum opened, I would often spend significant time investigating various arcane issues, usually through trial and error. Now I often resolve such issues through a short series of messages on the forum."

Not all of the forums are specific to a product or language. Magazine-based forums such as *Data Based Advisor*, *Dr. Dobbs Journal* and the *Computer Language Forums* are visited by members with an interest in more

general programming, although many product-specific discussions also take place. The Portable Programming Forum sounds as if it would be visited by programmers with laptop computers, but it's devoted to discussions of programming languages that are easily ported between operating systems.

Guenter Dotzel, who is a compiler writer for ModulaWare GmbH in Erlangen, Germany, is a member of the CodePort Forum and also a member of the German subgroup of the ISO (International Standards Organization) Modula-2 compiler standardization body. Recently when Dotzel needed the Modula-2 Input/Output library definition files in machine-readable form for his company's compiler development group, Tom Catrall, assistant sysop, uploaded a set of the final definitions into CodePort's library. Not only did Dotzel save the time it would have taken to type the definitions, he also detected three errors that eventually would have gone unnoticed to the final international committee draft.

Another form of support you can get from CompuServe is help in administering your software business practice. The Computer Consultants' Forum is a place where developers of all sorts congregate to exchange information on business-related topics such as marketing, how much to charge and how to collect unpaid bills.

Mike Sax, who manages a Windows programming and consulting business in Belgium and does work for U.S. software firms, runs that part of his business through Compu-

Serve. In several instances, he has made contact with potential customers and concluded an agreement online to develop software. "The only thing we need overnight mail for is to exchange contracts, since you can't e-mail a signature yet," he says. Sax is currently working on a project that resulted from a contact with another developer through CompuServe. He and his U.S.-based partner have been working out the specifications and sending source and sample files back and forth via CompuServe Mail.

The libraries in every forum are another resource for programmers (see "Developer Services on CompuServe," p. 24). The contents vary from product announcements and demonstration programs to freeware and shareware routines that can be embedded in your own code.

Symbiosis, an association that brings mutual benefit to everyone involved, describes the driving force behind the developer forums. But another benefit also occurs: Synergism, the process of creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, results from the exchange of information and ideas. Whether you're looking for a useful subroutine, seeking assistance or just looking for a place to chat with others of similar interests, you'll find what you need in one of the developer forums.

Harry Green is president of Pacific Netcom Inc., a Portland, Ore., firm that consults with businesses on using office automation and telecommunications to improve productivity. His CompuServe User ID number is 70007,431.

Developer Services on CompuServe

The following is a list of the principal forums and databases on CompuServe offering assistance to third-party developers.

ACIUS (GO ACIUS)—ACIUS products, compilers, third-party products, consultant's area.

AI Expert Forum (GO AIEXPERT)—The electronic edition of *AI Expert* magazine and a forum for exchange of ideas and information on artificial intelligence.

Ashton-Tate Development Registry (GO ADR)—Provides information on 1,400 value-added resellers, independent software vendors and consultants.

Ask3Com Forum (GO ASKFORUM)—Information on products and services, technical articles and an area for discussion of 3Com products.

Banyan Forum (GO BANYAN)—Provides information for users and developers of products for Banyan local area networks.

BASIS International Forum (GO BASIS)—Provides support for TAOS and BBx Progression series of products.

Blyth Forum (GO BLYTH)—For those interested in Blyth databases and other products, this forum provides technical support and contact with other users.

Borland dBase Forum (GO DBASE)—Operated by Borland to support users of dBase products.

Borland Programming Forum A (GO BPROGA)—Provides a discussion area and support for Turbo Pascal, object-oriented programming, Toolbox/Paradox Engine and Language Express.

Borland Programming Forum B (GO BPROGB)—Covers other Borland products including Assembly, Turbo Prolog, C++ programming languages and Paradox Engine.

CASE DCI Forum (GO CASEFORUM)—Sponsored by Digital Consulting Inc., this forum is open to anyone interested in promoting the use and development of Computer Aided Software Engineering.

Claris—Provides support for HyperCard, Filemaker, Resolve and other Claris products. **Macintosh Vendor A Forum (GO MACVENA)**, Section 14, "Claris."

Computer Consultants' Forum (GO CONSULT)—A forum where computer consultants meet to exchange ideas and business opportunities, and occasionally pick up a consulting job.

Computer Language Forum (GO CLMFORUM)—An extension of *Computer Language* magazine. Distributes code, programs and articles from the magazine.

Creative Solutions/Forth Forum (GO FORTH)—Sponsored by Creative Solutions Inc., this forum supports the Forth language and CSI's products.

Data Based Advisor Forum (GO DBA)—An electronic extension of *Data Based Advisor* magazine, this forum is a gathering place for database specialists.

Dr. Dobb's Forum (GO DDJFORUM)—An electronic extension of *Dr. Dobb's Journal*, this forum publishes code found in the magazine and serves as a clearinghouse for professional programmers.

Fox Software Forum (GO FOXFORUM)—Supports Fox database management and graphics software plus third-party software, hardware, operating systems and more.

IBM APPC Info Exchange Forum (GO APPCFORUM)—For those interested in the design and implementation of applications that use Advanced Program-to-Program Communications.

IBM Programming Forum (GO IBM-PRO)—Provides programming assistance for assemblers, source code in a variety of languages and help from other programmers.

IBM OS/2 Developers Forum (GO OS2DEV)—This forum is a gathering place for OS/2 developers.

Intel Access Forum (GO INTEL-ACCESS)—Provides programming tips, benchmarks, literature and technical information on Intel's microprocessor families.

Macintosh Developers Forum (GO MACDEV)—Devoted to programming Macintosh computers for either professional or personal purposes.

Microsoft BASIC Forum (GO MS-BASIC)—Provides technical support for the Microsoft BASIC family of products including Visual BASIC.

Microsoft Client-Server Computing Forum (GO MSNET)—Provides technical support for client-server databases.

Microsoft Developer Relations Forum (GO MSDR)—A place where developers can exchange information and ideas concerning Microsoft systems-related products.

Microsoft Developer Technical Library (GO MSDNLB)—Contains technical articles and sample code for downloading.

Microsoft Developer Knowledge Base (GO MDKB)—Full-text searchable database including bug lists, fixes, documentation errors, press releases and more.

Microsoft Languages Forum (GO MSLANG)—Offers technical support for Microsoft C/C++ languages and other language products.

Microsoft Win32 Forum (GO MSWIN32)—Provides information about the Microsoft Win32 API (application programming interface) and future versions of Microsoft Windows that will support the Win32 API.

Microsoft Windows Extension Forum (GO WINEXT)—This forum currently offers support and information on OLE (object linking and embedding) and the Windows for Pen SDK.

Microsoft Windows SDK Forum (GO WINSDK)—Provides technical support for the Windows Software Development Kit.

Nantucket Forum (GO NANFORUM)—Designed primarily for Clipper and McMax users, this forum is also beneficial for anyone interested in developing database applications.

Nantucket GmbH Forum (GO NAN-GMBH)—A German-language forum for support of Clipper.

NeXT Forum (GO NEXTFORUM)—Provides a gathering place for users and developers of products for NeXT computers.

Novell Forum C (GO NOVC)—Provides support for developers of products for Novell local area networks.

Oracle Forum (GO ORACLE)—Provides online technical support and libraries of tips and routines for Oracle products.

Portable Programming Forum (GO CODEPORT)—Support for the Pascal programming language and other languages such as ADA, APL and C that are portable between hardware platforms.

Revelation Technologies Forum (GO REVELATION)—Provides a forum for application developers to exchange experiences with Advanced Revelation.

Symantec Forum (GO SYMFORUM)—Devoted to discussion of Symantec's software products including THINK C, THINK Pascal and Zortech C++.

Unix Forum (GO UNIX)—Discussions cover Unix including basics, communication, UUCP, and tools such as C.

Microsoft's Aid to Windows-Making

When Lawrence Blanchard recently got stuck on a bitmap problem, he turned to the Windows Software Development Kit Forum for help. Blanchard, a software developer at CenterPoint Technology Ltd. in Peterborough, England, was working on PoleStar, a program due for release soon. Since it is the company's first Windows-based product, a few problems were encountered during development. This is where CompuServe came in handy.

"The forum I use most is the Microsoft Windows SDK Forum, which is aimed at Windows developers," says Blanchard. "In the few months I've been using this forum, I must have posed a dozen questions and received a satisfactory solution within a day or two for every one."

In case you haven't discovered it yet, the Windows SDK Forum is one of seven forums and a wealth of other resources in the new Microsoft Developer Services Area (GO MSDS). The area, which was organized in February, includes the SDK, Windows Extensions and Win32 Forums. The Windows Extensions Forum offers support and information on object linking, embedding and using Windows for Pen SDK. The Win32 Forum distributes information on the forthcoming Windows NT operating system.

Besides the three Windows forums, other forums in the area include BASIC Languages, C and Other Languages, Client-Server Computing and the Developer Relations Forums. These offer information on languages, tools and utilities from a developer's perspective. "Many experienced developers from well-known companies frequent this area and are most helpful to other developers," says Blanchard. "Without the help I've obtained from CompuServe, I would have wasted weeks trying to track down solutions to obscure problems."

Since November, Microsoft has greatly increased its developer support on CompuServe, according to Pat Bellamah, Microsoft's Marketing Manager for Developer Services. "We want to use CompuServe as a channel for developers to tell us what they want, and for us to provide more useful information to the development community," she says. "For example, we've sold more than 75,000 Windows SDKs, which makes it difficult to provide one-to-one support. Through the CompuServe forums, we can provide one-to-many support."

Besides the forums, the Microsoft Developer Support Area includes the Developer Knowledge Base (GO MDKB), which offers more than 10,000 full-text, searchable articles compiled by Microsoft Product Support on Microsoft developer-specific products, as well as information on bug lists, fix lists, documentation errors and company press releases. "The Knowledge Base has long ex-

isted on CompuServe," Bellamah says, "but we took out the end-user information so now it contains only developer-specific information."

The Developer Support Area also includes access to two specialized libraries. The Developer Network Technical Library, added in May, contains a wide variety of technical articles and sample code. The Microsoft Software Library is keyword-searchable, and the files can be downloaded for developers to use. This service is also available through the Microsoft Connection (GO MSOFT).

All of the information and services are provided free of charge except for normal connect-time fees. Microsoft also offers Microsoft Service Requests, an optional, private, technical-support area. Developers can obtain direct support from Microsoft Developer Support engineers for a per-incident fee of \$150.

The Microsoft Developer Services Area is not restricted to developers. Anyone can join, but end-user issues are best handled in the Microsoft End-User Forums (GO MSUSER). ◀

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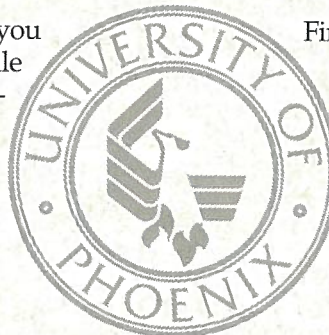
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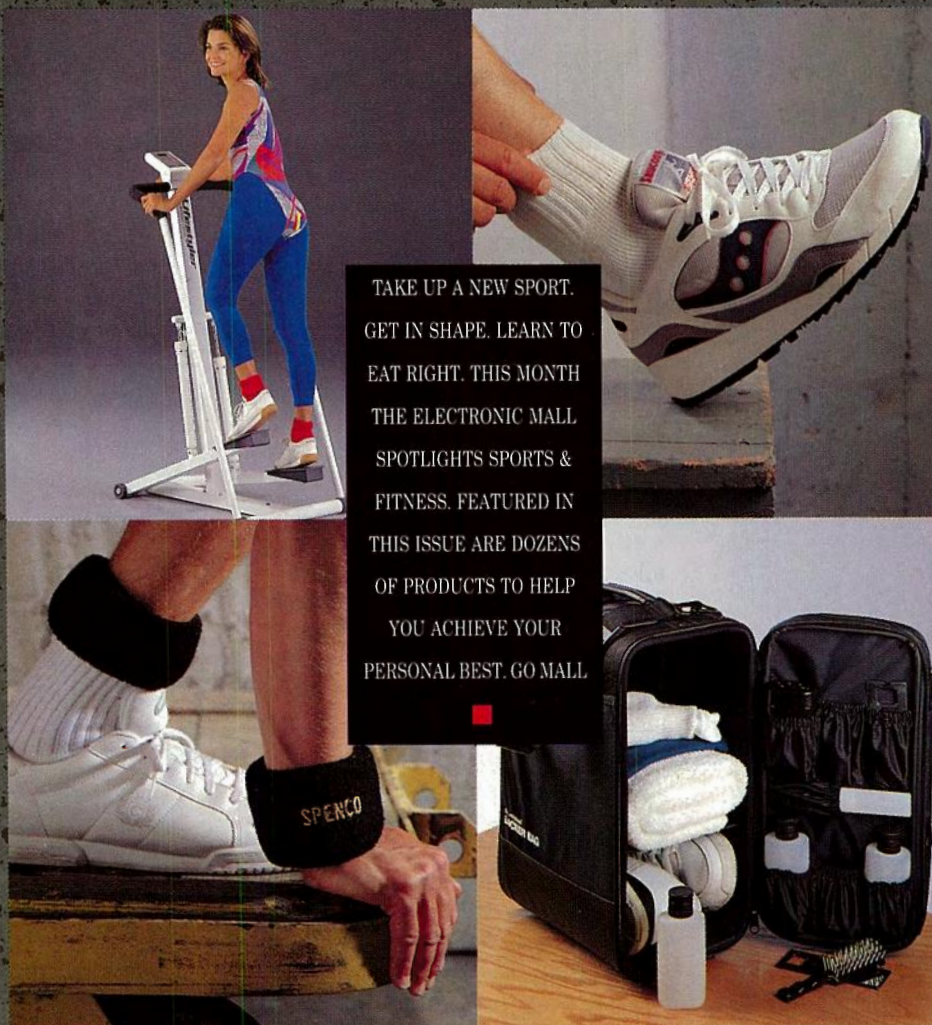
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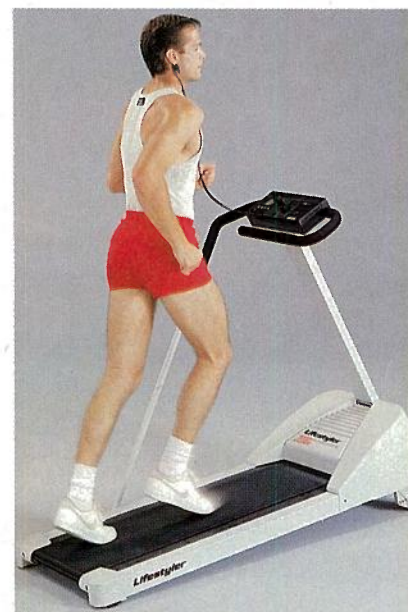
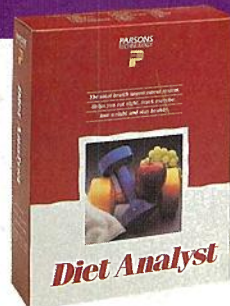
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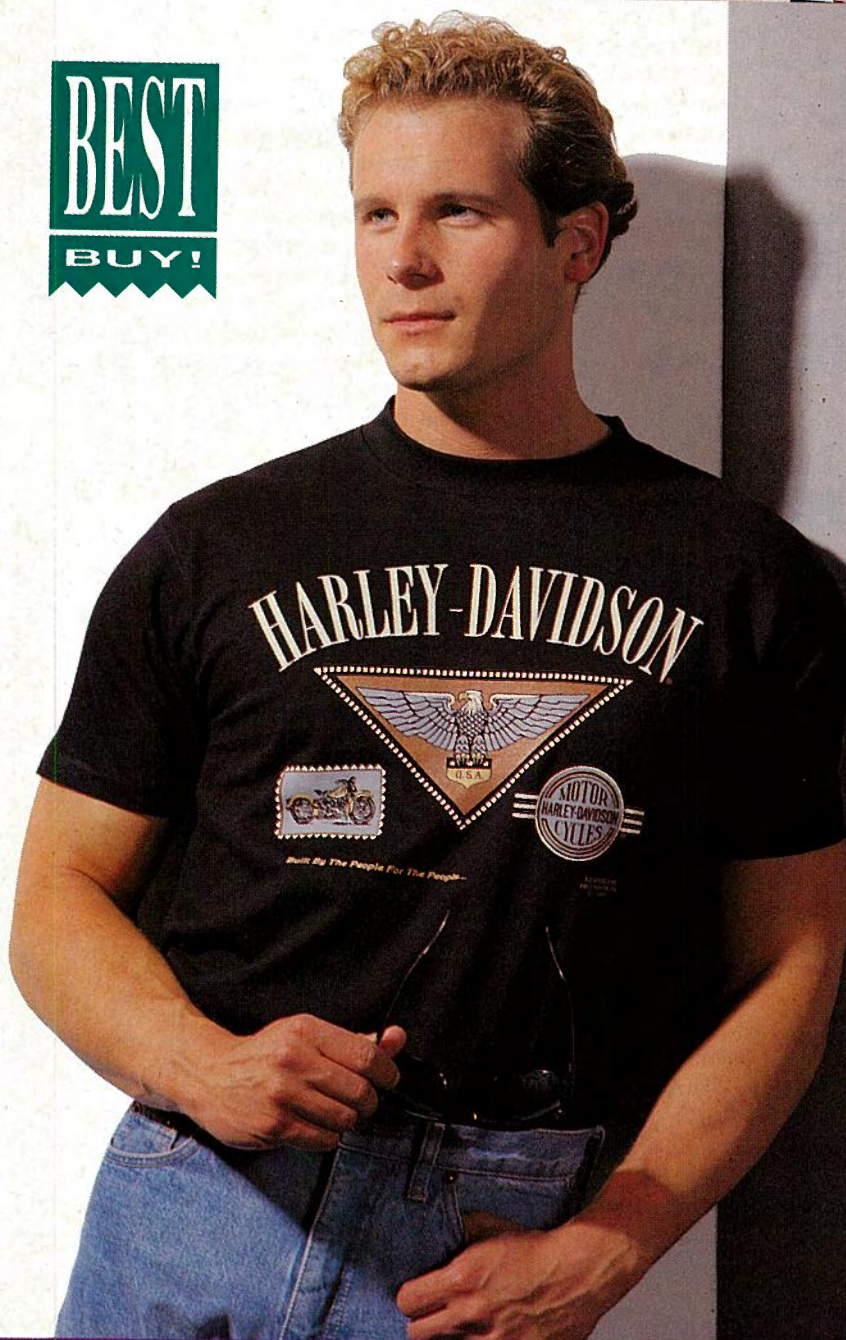
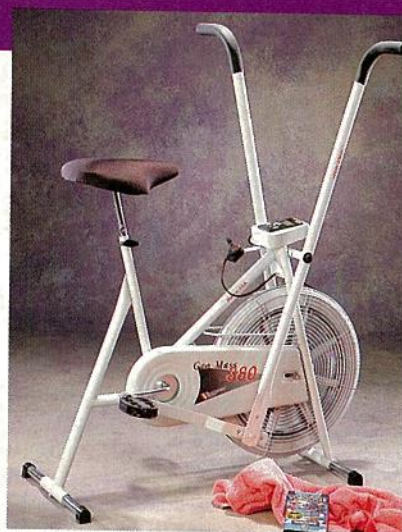
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#1: Relax. Take your time. Remember, The Electronic Mall is free of connect-time charges 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Browse the online directory by store name or department. Check out "This Week's Mall News" for bulletins on new stores, special sales, contests and connect-time rebates. Take your time. The connect clock is off.

#2: Have your credit cards handy. Most major credit cards are accepted by Mall stores. Read each store's "How to Order" section before you place an order because payment methods vary. Use the Quick Reference Chart on pages 6 and 7 as a guide.

#3: Zip right to your favorite store. In a hurry? Head straight to your favorite store. Every store has a unique GO code. You will find these GO codes in the Quick Reference Chart on pages 6 and 7 and online in the Mall directory.

#4: Type "O" to order. When you have selected your purchase, type the letter "O." Your order will be stored in a personal file until you are ready to check out. You can continue shopping in a store, selecting additional items for purchase, or you can head directly to the checkout counter.

#5: Type "Checkout" to complete your order. When you are finished shopping in a store, type "Checkout." You will be prompted for size, color, delivery method and other key information. You can cancel your order at any point by typing "Exit." You will also be asked to specify your name, address, phone number and payment method. Don't worry. This information is confidential.

#6: Review your order summary carefully. Once you have responded to all prompts, you will receive an order summary. Review it carefully. You have the option of changing any or all of your order. You must complete or cancel an order before leaving a store.

#7: Keep the order confirmation. Most stores offer the option of requesting an order confirmation through CompuServe Mail. Use this number if you need to inquire about your order.

#8: Tap a store's expertise. If you have a question about a product or service, contact the store's manager. Each store is staffed by people eager to serve you and answer your questions. Many stores post their toll-free 800 numbers, fax numbers and CompuServe Mail numbers online. Most also have a "Talk to Us" section online. Take advantage of their expertise and free technical support.

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Win a 2400 baud send/receive fax capability modem. GO DM

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GO BB

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THE ELECTRONIC MALL/ QUICK REFERENCE CHART

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Air France	AF
American Express	AE
American Management Assoc.	AMA
Americana Clothing	AC
Apparel Concepts For Men	AP
AT&T Toll-Free 800 Directory	ATT
Automobile Information Center	AI
AutoQuot-R	AQ
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Barnes & Noble	BN
Boat Xpress	BX
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Checkfree Corporation	CF
The Chef's Catalog	CC
Coffee Anyone???	COF
Columbia House	FREEC
CompuBooks	CBK
CompuServe Store	ORDER
Computer Express	CE
Computer Shopper	CS
The Computer Store	TCS
Contact Lens Supply	CL
Court Pharmacy	RX
Create-A-Book	CK
Dalco Computer Electronics	DA
Data Based Advisor	DB
Desktop Direct	DD
Direct Micro	DM
Discount Music Supply	DMS
Disney	DS
Dow Jones & Co.	DJ
Dreyfus Corp.	DR
Executive Stamper	EX
Figi's Gifts	FG
Florida Fruit Shippers	FFS
Flower Stop	FS
Ford Electronic Showroom	FORD
Ford Motor Company	FMC
Garrett Wade Woodworking	GW
The Gift Sender	GS
Gimmee Jimmy's Cookies	GIM

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JCPenney's
Olympic Salute

Win one of three official Olympic sweatshirt and sweatpants sets. GO JCP

AUGUST 1992

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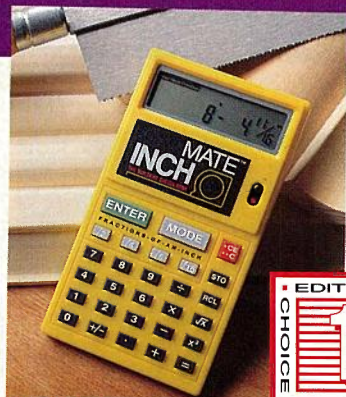
Exercise your legs and arms simultaneously, build muscle, increase endurance and be on your way to better fitness with this cross country ski machine. Features include chrome plated rails, large non-skid foot pedals, extra heavy handlebars and comfortable foam grips. Model #1100. Sorry, ordering is for SAC members only. Not a member? Try Shoppers Advantage Club for three months for only \$1.

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COMPUTER EXPRESS. GO CE
PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER LIST PRICE \$39.95
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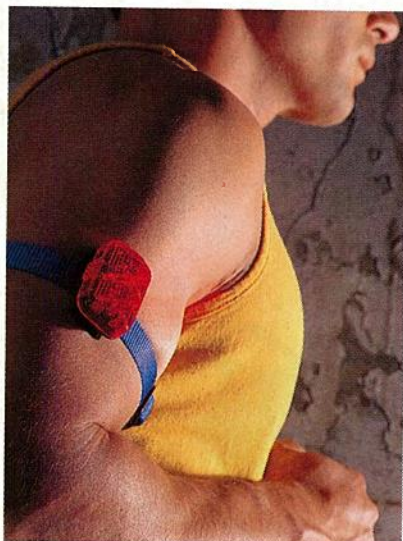


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GARRET WADE WOODWORKING TOOLS & SUPPLIES. GO GW

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PETWORKS CLUB PRICE \$17.19



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BOSE EXPRESS MUSIC. GO BEM

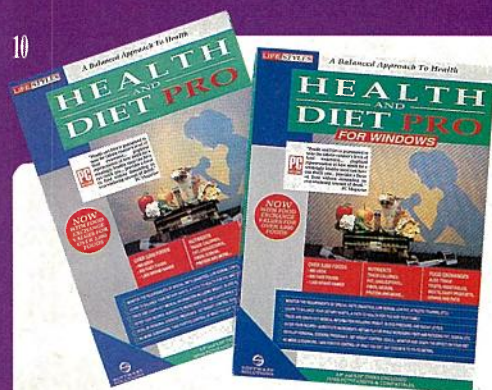


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Track calories, protein, fat, fiber and more with *Health and Diet PRO*. Plan your menu from over 3,000 pre-loaded food listings, or add your own. Create custom meals and design menus for special diets. Includes food exchange value. Great for diabetics and weight watchers.

COMPUTER EXPRESS. GO CE

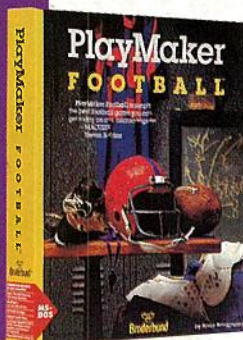
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JCPENNEY. GO JCP

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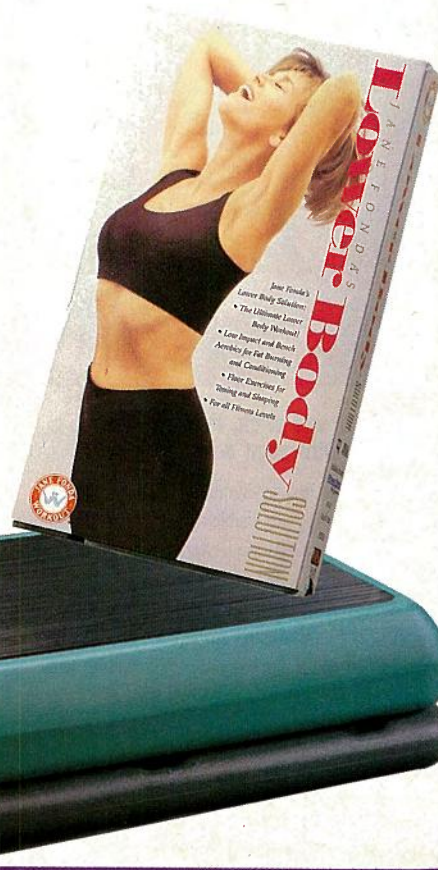
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Steam vegetables. Stew tomatoes. Simmer stocks. This five-piece stainless steel set has everything you need to cook up a healthy, hearty summer meal. Includes an 8-qt. stock pot, a large steamer basket insert, a small steamer rack insert, a double-vented cover and multipurpose tongs.

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Get complete details online. When you're ready to incorporate, complete the online order form and your corporation will be formed within 48 hours!

A GUIDE TO INCORPORATING. GO INC

Get the best car deal!

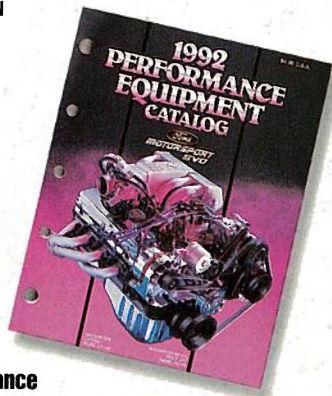
When you're ready to buy, sell or trade a car, consult the online auto valuation experts at Auto Information Center to be sure you're getting a good deal. You can order unbiased valuation reports from Auto Information Center for New Cars (dealer cost), Used Cars (wholesale/retail) and Collector Cars (market value). Used car reports are only \$5.95. You can even get a free new car Dealer Cost Report when you order the list of Buying Services for \$14.95. And reports are delivered through CompuServe Mail, so there's no waiting for the postman! GO AI

AUTO INFORMATION CENTER. GO AI
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Get your exercise as you pedal yourself across pools, lakes or rivers in this sturdy float. Constructed of heavy-duty, puncture-resistant 35mm PVC plastic, the float features a large banana-sloped back pillow and sturdy side handles to give you a firm grip while pedaling. Supports up to 200 lbs. Measures 37"x61".

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Join in the world's fastest growing recreational sport, in-line skating. The Ultra-Glide by Ultra-Wheels provides excellent low-impact exercise and is fun, too! Designed for recreational skaters of all levels, it features side venting in a flexible polyurethane boot for cool comfort, an easy-to-use, custom-fitting, three-buckle boot, reinforced nylon frame and two brakes. Color is black with purple and blue. Men's full sizes only (5-13). Women order one size smaller.

**SUNGLASSES, SHAVERS & MORE. GO SN
ULTRA-GLIDE SKATE
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SALE PRICE \$104**



Step up to Buick's Regal Sedan.

The 1992 Buick Regal is everything the competition hoped it wouldn't be! In fact, at its introduction last year, *Car and Driver* magazine hailed it as "Low, sleek and athletic...one of the best behaved American cars, ever." A few of the reasons, aside from the Regal Sedan's outstanding looks, are its standard 3.1-litre V-6 engine, air conditioning, four-wheel independent suspension and a complete listing of selected standard and optional equipment. You'll find complete specs online. Request a free disk or color brochure, too.

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A Case of CD-Jeebies



STEVE SKELTON

MONEY MATTERS

CM's Money Matters Credo:

To the casual and serious investor alike, we vow to provide sanity when the bulls and bears run wild; indeed to explain and inform. Where money matters, we'll provide the means of attaining discretion and thus the better part of financial valor.

Bailing Out of the Bank Account

Sticking with CDs, p. 30

Do paltry CD returns have you in search of another parking space for your cash? Here are ideas.

If you have a certificate of deposit coming due, you may be asking yourself the \$64,000-or-so question: "Should I roll it over—or move it over into something else?"

Not long ago, putting cash reserves into CDs was an ideal choice, especially if you were reluctant to gamble your money in riskier ventures. Just two years ago, some CDs earned 10 percent or more. Plus they were sure-fire investments that let you sleep at night, assured that your principal was absolutely safe.

But with interest on short-term CDs sagging near 4 percent—and inflation and taxes eroding those skimpy returns still further—even the most cautious investors now may be lying awake wondering if there isn't some way to get more bang for their investment buck. Indeed, in the past year, investors yanked more than \$155 billion from CDs at banks and thrift institutions.

So what *should* you do with those cash reserves? These days more disgruntled CD-owners are pondering something they may never have considered before: a venture into the daunting world of investments that are more complex, more risky—and, possibly, more lucrative. Once they decide to take that step, however, a bewildering array of options awaits, from bank-offered money market accounts to money market mutual funds, all the way up to high-risk stocks and options. What's a CD owner to do?

"You can't give a generic answer, because each individual is different," cautions Richard B. Hoey, chief economist for Dreyfus Corp., an investment management and mutual fund company available in The Electronic Mall. Hoey and other experts stress that when it comes to investments, there's no "one size fits all" answer.

Mel Masuda, an investor who frequents

CompuServe's financial forums, agrees that disappointment with CDs is no reason for novices to rush into stocks, where the value of their shares can swing fast and hard: "While interest rates haven't been this low in ages, it doesn't mean that people should panic and start moving their hard-earned money into other investments. Unless you're willing to assume some risk and can afford to lose the investment, it's best to stay with the safe investments." Adds Bill Porter, president of Trade*Plus, the parent company of E*Trade, a new online brokerage: "If you're going to go for a greater return, understand that it carries a greater risk."

The answer that's right for you will depend on a careful evaluation of your own personal financial circumstances and goals, as well as an honest assessment of your psychological tolerance for risk. "If you've got a debt coming due in 45 days and you're going to need a lot of money to pay on that debt, there's not a lot of sense in taking a big price risk with it," Hoey says. "Other people have safe jobs, a lot of excess capital, not much debt, and while they may not like to see a price decline, they could actually absorb it without disrupting their financial position too badly."

For those who do want to venture out of CDs one cautious step at a time, several low-risk alternatives are worth considering. Bank-offered money market accounts, which recently have had slightly higher yields than CDs, are a popular place to "park" cash reserves or maturing CD dollars, because they offer complete liquidity and safety. Many experts consider such accounts just that, though—a "parking" place for your money until you decide to spend it or invest in something with more potential.

Although these accounts don't pay much more than CDs, you may find banks that, due to their need for liquid funds, will pay more interest than others, says Martin Bradshaw, publisher of *RateGram*, a weekly survey of the highest available returns on such investments as CDs and money market

Should I CD? Where to Look Online

To CD, or not to CD?

If that is the question for you, CompuServe has online resources to help:

FORUMS

Investors' Forum (GO INVFORUM)—Pros and amateurs mingle to discuss investing, in such sections as "Mutual Funds," "Bonds/Fixed Income" and "The Novice Investor." A number of library files offer useful primers and recommended reading for would-be investors.

NAIC Forum (GO NAIC)—National Association of Investors Corp. Includes the Pioneer On-Line Investment Club.

MECA Forum (GO MECA)—Supports MECA personal-finance software, and is frequented by knowledgeable investors.

ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

Business Database Plus (GO BUSDB)—Contains full-text articles from more than 450 regional, U.S. and worldwide business and trade publications. Offers sales and marketing ideas, product news, industry trends and analysis, and profiles of a variety of companies.

Magazine Database Plus (GO MAGDB)—Offers full-text articles from more than 90 general-interest publications, including articles on current events, business, science, sports, people, personal finance, family issues, education,

the environment and travel. Includes such publications as *Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine* (formerly *Changing Times*), *The Atlantic*, *The Economist* and *U.S. News & World Report*. Surcharged.

ONLINE BROKERAGE SERVICES

E*Trade Securities (GO ETRADE)

Quick & Reilly (GO QWK)

Spear Rees Company (GO SPEAR)

OTHER FINANCIAL SERVICES

RateGram (GO RATEGRAM)—Offers regularly updated reports on where to get the highest possible returns on federally insured CDs, jumbo CDs and bank-offered money-market accounts at U.S. banks and thrift institutions. A free *RateGram* users guide is available online.

Dreyfus (GO DR)—One of the largest managers of mutual funds in the United States, offering extensive free information about various kinds of mutual funds. Available in The Electronic Mall.

Twentieth Century Investments (GO TC)—A mutual fund company that takes a stock investment team management approach to its 13 no-load mutual funds. Available in The Electronic Mall.

accounts (see "Sticking with CDs?" p. 30).

Or you might shift some cash reserves into U.S. Treasury bills, which are bought at a discount and then redeemed at face value after only three months. In recent months, yields on T-bills slightly outpaced those on CDs. Treasuries offer an often-overlooked advantage: The income on their interest is not subject to state and local taxes, which can be especially useful in high-tax states, such as New York and California.

Beyond these super-safe alternatives lies

a whole spectrum of possibilities. The next step, many experts say, is a move into mutual funds, where your dollars are pooled with those of thousands of other people, then invested and managed by a professional. These funds, which offer instant diversification and good liquidity, invest in everything from very safe government bonds to more aggressive—but more risky—growth stocks.

One disgruntled CD owner who recently moved into mutual funds is Chuck Welsh, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

worker in Cincinnati. "I found out how easy it was to invest in them by reading messages in the Investors' Forum on CompuServe. I always thought you needed 'big bucks' to invest in stocks and other instruments," he says. "By reading in the forum I found out that you could invest x dollars per month with little or no up-front money. My mom is a jittery investor because she is retired and does not want to lose any money. Therefore, I have suggested that she divide her money in thirds: cash, growth and income." And, he



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DEALER ON
VOLKSWAGEN'S
ON-LINE LOCATOR

COMING SOON
TO A MODEM
NEAR YOU

FAHRVERGNÜGEN 

How to Lose Your Make-Believe Shirt

If you've always had an urge to run with the bulls and chase the bears on Wall Street but never had the money or the nerve, here's your chance: Now you can make \$1 million playing the market online.

That's "playing" the market, of course. You can't spend the earnings you get from the stock market games on CompuServe. But then, you don't have to worry about losing your \$100,000 up-front stake either. It's all play money. And it's a great way for beginners to get their feet wet in the unpredictable world of stocks.

Although the games have a few limits (the rules don't permit trading on margin or selling "short," for instance), they provide a vivid, even nail-biting simulation of the ups and downs of the stock market.

At the beginning of the month, players get \$100,000 in play money. They adopt "handles," such as "Scrooge," "Boesky" or "Midas," and invest their cash in the stocks of their choice. The

handles of the top 10 investors are posted daily. The computer posts real changing stock prices, dividends, stock splits, even jittery market reactions to current events, with much of the complexity of real life. Game money not invested in stocks earns interest at current money market fund rates.

Stock trades may be made during the trading day or after the market close. Trades posted after the market close receive the opening day price. Commission costs will be deducted from each trade.

To join the fun, access E*Trade Securities (GO ETGAME), Quick & Reilly (GO QWK) or Spear Rees & Co. (GO SPEAR). E*Trade Securities awards \$50 in U.S. currency to each of the top two game players every month. Quick & Reilly and Spear require that you set up a trading account to access the games, while the E*Trade game is available to non-account holders.

adds, folks in the Investors' Forum offered many ideas about just how to mix those categories. While there's no way to know if those funds will make money—or lose it—Welsh feels fairly confident that they're bound to earn more than CDs.

Some investors look to stocks, which range from fairly secure ones such as utilities, up the line to high-risk stocks of small growth companies. If you're looking to ease into stocks, you might consider a "balanced" mutual fund, which invests both in common stocks and in bonds, such as the Balanced Investors Fund offered by Twentieth Century Investors Inc., a family of no-load mutual funds (which are sold directly to investors rather than through a broker).

"In our case it's a 60-40 mix: 60 percent common stocks, and 40 percent bonds and other fixed-income securities," says company spokesman Gunnar Hughes. "What this fund tends to do is give you both—opportunities for capital growth over time, through the stocks, plus the opportunity for current income through the bonds. In addition, the nature of the fixed-income side of the product tends to help dampen the volatility of the overall investment."

But bear in mind that when it comes to investing, "there's absolutely nothing that's foolproof," says Investors' Forum Assistant

MONEY MATTERS

Sysop Robyn Greene. "At least on a relatively short-term basis, when you're dealing with three, six or nine months, there are many worse things in life than just making 3 percent on your money—one of which is losing 25 percent of your money!"

Indeed, adds Dreyfus' Hoey, one of the best ways to approach a new investment is to assume that you don't know *what* the "right" decision is. "Often people tend to beat themselves over the head if by chance they make the wrong decision, and, frankly, there are a lot of investment professionals that make mistakes."

Don't let frustration over poor CD performance force you into an impulsive, all-or-nothing decision, Hoey warns. "Partial moves make a lot of sense. You're not going to be completely right, but you're less likely to be completely wrong."

"There are people who know what the investment facts are, but there's no one who knows for sure what the future will bring. There are no gurus. I've been a guru—and I know for sure—nobody knows." ◀

Martha Barnett is a Louisville-based free-lance writer. Her new book, A Garden of Words, a collection of essays on flowers and etymology, is published by Times Books/Random House.

Sticking with CDs? Compare and Contrast

Although certificates of deposit aren't as exciting as other investments, many people buy them for guaranteed peace of mind and a steady stream of income, even if that stream sometimes slows to a trickle. Many folks never venture out of CDs at all, while others may be enticed into riskier investments, only to lose money and scurry back into CDs, more conservative than ever.

Whatever your reasons for sticking with the staid old CD, there's a good chance you could be earning more interest than you are now, says CD expert Martin Bradshaw. The key, he says, is to "shop around" for the best deals. "Select, don't settle," he advises.

Bradshaw is publisher and CEO of the Bradshaw Financial Network, which offers *RateGram*, a weekly survey of the highest returns obtainable on federally insured CDs, jumbo CDs (over \$100,000), and money-market accounts at U.S. banks and thrift institutions. *RateGram* reports are published online (GO RATEGRAM) and in several major newspapers and magazines.

"For years, it was possible to get higher yields out of state," Bradshaw says, but many investors resisted the idea of going elsewhere. Now, however, many consumers realize that CD interest can vary a couple of percentage points from bank to bank—a difference that can translate into hundreds of added dollars in returns. While sending money to an out-of-town bank may seem like more trouble than it's worth, the opposite is true, Bradshaw says.

Here are some tips from Bradshaw on how to "peak your interest" from CDs:

Double-check the maturity value. "For the same stated rate there are many, many parameters that can affect the total dollar yield," Bradshaw says. Ask the bank officer, "What will my CD be valued at maturity?" and get it in writing.

Check for a tiered rating structure. Ask if the bank pays more for larger deposits. "In many cases, for a few dollars more you can get a higher return on your whole balance."

Consider breaking up large amounts. If you want to invest \$75,000 in CDs, consider breaking it up into smaller portions, such as six \$10,000 certificates and three \$5,000 ones. That way, if you do have to withdraw \$5,000 early for an unexpected expense, you pay a penalty on only that amount.

Do your homework. "Investors should do more for themselves than just rely on those who are paid to help them," Bradshaw says. "There are a lot of valuable services on CompuServe, in addition to *RateGram*, that provide people with direction, thought and a wealth of information."



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Ravioli meets revolutionary: Lunch spot Catina's, statue of Revere

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▼
Beantown's Best Pizza

▼
Hotel Haggling, p. 36

▶ A patriot's stony gaze fixes upon cafés and calzones in Boston's North End slice of Southern Italy.

The North End is Boston in microcosm—built on a Puritan bedrock, shaped by revolution and populated by waves of immigrants. It's been a neighborhood since 1630 and boasts a pair of America's chief patriotic shrines: Old North Church and Paul Revere's house.

But despite its links to the collective American past, the North End is hardly a "living history" museum. The flow of immigration over the last 150 years has saved the district from the reverential fate that often befalls "historically significant" sites. People really live in this bustling neighborhood of churches and parks, restaurants and cafés. The North End is where many Bostonians go for a good Italian meal, a play or nightclub act at the Theatre Lobby and a late night of café-hopping.

Many out-of-towners venture into the North End as they follow the Freedom Trail—a stripe of red paint or strip of red brick embedded in the sidewalk to link Boston's Revolutionary War sites. Even with the glass towers of Boston's financial district visible on the skyline, John Hancock and Paul Revere would probably still recognize their old stomping grounds. Only a dozen structures remain from their days, and Hanover Street was widened a century ago,

but the basic street plan has hardly changed since the Battle of Bunker Hill. A few waterfront streets girdle the district and a dense crosshatch of narrow ways climbs from the wharves to the top of Copp's Hill.

Paul Revere's house is, by coincidence, the oldest residence still standing in Boston. When the 35-year-old silversmith bought the structure in 1770, it was already nearly a century old. Some Revere family possessions remain on display in this National Historic Site—an armchair, a chest of drawers, one of Paul's early silver pitchers.

Boston's oldest church—the 1723 Christ Church, Episcopal, better known as Old North Church—has an equally significant place in American history. On the night of April 18, 1775, sexton Robert Newman hung lanterns in the belfry of its towering spire to signal British troop movements to rebels across the harbor in Charlestown. A small museum gift shop next door contains such artifacts as a musket from the Battle of Lexington and Concord and a vial of tea from the Boston Tea Party.

The church is very much an active parish, and the interior of the building is classic, lovely and restrained—a model of box pews, brass chandeliers and airy light. Architecture buffs should depart briefly from the Colonial history tour to examine the interior of St. Stephen's, the church visible across the mall behind Christ Church. St. Stephen's is the last remaining example of Charles

National Park Info Online

Old North Church and the Paul Revere House are two of six sites that make up the Boston National Historic Park, part of the National Park Service. The Boston sites, although physically separated, are linked by their ties to the American Revolution.

When most people think of the National Park Service, images of Old Faithful, giant sequoias and the Grand Tetons spring to mind. While it's true that the Park Service puts its emphasis on preserving unique wilderness areas, it also administers a wide range of historic properties and cultural resources of national significance. Many of them, like the Boston park, are in the middle of cities. Others are just outside.

Only the most dedicated history buff would plan a complete vacation itinerary of national

historical parks. But they are fascinating spots to see if you happen to be in the neighborhood, and you'd kick yourself if you got home and learned that you'd missed the opportunity.

Information USA (GO INFOUSA) can help you research what's available at your vacation destination or along the way. Check out the 31 offerings under "Parks and Camping." Option 9, "National/Historical Parks/Preserves," lists all of the National Park Service sites by state or territory. More information is available from the parks directly or from the offices listed with phone numbers under Option 16, "National Park Service Regional Offices." Park Service maps and brochures tend to be extremely practical.

—PH & DL



The world of Old World cafés on display: Storefront liqueurs and antique espresso maker

Bulfinch's church design to survive in Boston—an 1802 masterpiece of balance and clarity that seems the archetype of an American house of worship.

Uphill from the churches lies Copp's Hill Burying Ground, Boston's second oldest cemetery, first used in the 1660s. The famous and the obscure lie side by side: One modest crypt holds the mortal remains of preacher-politicians Cotton and Increase Mather, while a broken column marks the grave of Prince Hall, leader of Boston's African-American community in the early years of the republic. Patriot Daniel Malcolm's tombstone—chipped by musketballs fired by British soldiers during target practice—notes that he lies 10 feet down, presumably safe from further musket fire.

Because it towers above the surrounding streets, the burial ground is more bright than melancholy, its lofty heights affording a

sweeping view across the harbor to the Bunker Hill Monument and the *U.S.S. Constitution*. "Old Ironsides," the oldest commissioned ship in the U.S. Navy, was built in a North End shipyard, with Paul Revere's foundry supplying most of the fittings. Copp's Hill is a good spot to abandon the Freedom Trail's history lesson in favor of having a modern good time.

The North End today is a product of immigration and turn-of-the-century construction. Most of the Colonial and Federal structures were displaced during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, first by wooden tenements, later by brick apartment buildings with street-level storefronts. Today those stores house bakeries with crusty loaves piled in the windows, butcher shops with fresh rabbit and game birds, green-grocers with piles of eggplant and lemons, and cheese shops with huge rounds of



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Parmesan. In 1800, most North End residents could claim English or African descent, but the neighborhood soon sheltered Irish, then Jewish and finally Italian immigrants. Other groups moved on but the Italians remained, making the North End their own for the last 60 years.

The social heart of this southern Italian neighborhood beats purposefully on Hanover Street, the main drag that stretches less than a mile from the expressway (which isolates the neighborhood from downtown Boston) down to Constitution Wharf. The street scene is friendly and easygoing. Old men with cigars sit on benches in the sun, a few feet from the famous statue of you-know-who on horseback that graces the open spaces of the Paul Revere Mall. Women push baby strollers, while men cluster on street corners to criticize the Boston Red Sox or discuss European soccer matches in animated Italian. The neighborhood's 15,000 residents all seem to know each other. Streetside chatter is the daily coin of North End life, but celebrations and *tête-à-têtes* usually take place over a plate of pasta, a bottle of wine or a demitasse of espresso.

The North End has no shortage of linen-tablecloth restaurants. Local celebrities and *bon vivants* frequent Felicia's, a second-story gourmand's mecca just off Hanover on Richmond Street (reservations advised). As on the streets, most of the diners seem to know each other and the staff recognizes everyone. This is a spot for quiet talk and serious

Not Just the Bean and the Cod

Seafood is king in Boston, as it has been since the 1630s. The waters off the New England coast are among the most productive fisheries in the world, and when people come to town, they usually indulge in the local catch.

The city's most popular fish restaurant is Legal Seafood (Park Plaza, 617/426-4444), which offers a remarkable variety of ocean treats, usually in simple preparations that skip sauces and fancy accompaniments. The fish is absolutely fresh and each dish is served when it's ready, which can be disconcerting if one member of the party orders broiled scrod (baby cod or pollock) and another has baked stuffed lobster. The food doesn't wait, but the customers do, since Legal takes no reservations. Weekend dinnertime waits can be an hour or more.

Although Boston is known for lobster, 1992 is shaping up as a poor year for lobster fisheries. That translates into high prices and a trend away from whole lobster to dishes that incorporate lobster meat in a sauce or casserole. These are rich, sumptuous meals that rarely depart from such



Premiere source of squid: Calamari Café

classics as lobster Newburg or lobster chowder. For a preview of what these preparations are like, check the Cook's Online Forum (GO COOKS) and browse Library 6, "Meat-Poultry-Fish," using the keyword LOBSTER. A classic Newburg and chowder show up under LOBNWB.TXT and LOBCHW.TXT, respectively.

In the same library, you'll find some hints about the North End's favorite specialty fish, the squid. Admittedly, some peo-

ple find the idea of eating squid somewhat less than appetizing, but given absolutely fresh squid and good preparation, it's a delight. The Daily Catch may be the North End's premier squid restaurant, but calamari shows up in various incarnations on many menus. Check out SQUID1.TXT for a guide to preparing stuffed calamari, and SQUID.TXT for a classic preparation with tomatoes. A tasty calamari stew with polenta (CALSTW.TXT) emphasizes an important point in cooking squid. In this recipe, the squid cooks only one minute.

It's not essential to appreciate squid to dine in the North End. Although the North End is known simply as an Italian neighborhood, the cuisine is overwhelmingly Sicilian in style. Meals place a strong emphasis on tomatoes, eggplant, lemons, olives and other southern Mediterranean ingredients. The Cooks Online Forum's Library 7, "Ethnic Recipes," carries a good overview of this style of cookery in SOITAL.TXT, an examination of Southern Italian cooking complete with nearly two dozen recipes.

—PH & DL

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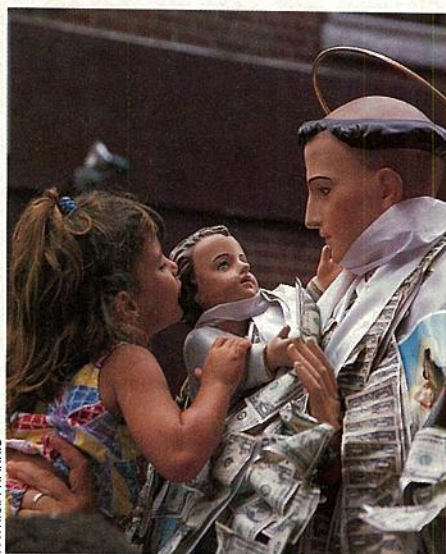
dining on heavy southern Italian fare.

The European is Boston's oldest Italian restaurant and features a long menu and enough dining rooms seemingly to seat the whole neighborhood at once. Constantly abuzz with conversation, the European is a family and party restaurant rather than a romantic getaway. Nor does the European forget Italy's most famous contribution to American cuisine: The house pizza specialties are outstanding.

Next door, Trio's offers thick, crusty slices of pizza to take out as well as its locally famous fresh pasta. Those who believe in eating where the locals go should queue up for lunch (only) at Galleria Umberto Rosticceria with its seat-yourself formica tables. The menu is minimal, but the pizza, calzones and other finger foods are uniformly excellent.

The longest lines in the North End are not at the solitary automatic teller machine, but outside a tiny bistro that weds Sicilian cookery to the bounty of the North Atlantic. Colonial Bostonians made their fortunes from codfish, but contemporary North End cooks work wonders with the region's plentiful squid. The Calamari Café, one of three Daily Catch restaurants, offers fried calamari, fried stuffed calamari, calamari meatballs, calamari scampi and the Daily Catch signature black pasta: fresh linguine colored with squid ink and topped with a variety of sauces and additives.

Equally Old World are the many cafés found all along Hanover Street. New Englanders with a yen to quaff Euro-caffeine



Honoring the saints: Feast-day festival

used to drive up to 100 miles to buy dark, oily Italian-roast beans from Polcari's, the old-time coffee roaster that has now become a gourmet shop. Long before coffee bars became fashionable, the North End was the only place in Boston to get a reliable cup of espresso or cappuccino.

The neighborhood still offers the greatest variety and its cafés are more than mere coffeehouses. Most have an array of Italian liqueurs behind the bar, and they also proffer pastries and *gelati*, the silky Italian ice creams. Each café sets a different style, and it's a common practice to spend an evening going from one to another—a serial excursion that can continue until 2 a.m. on weekends. The dark, smoke-filled Caffè Pompei is full of intrigue and deal making; the romantic Caffè Roma is packed with lovers holding hands across the tables. Ardent fans cheer their teams in front of the big-screen soccer matches at Caffè Dello Sport, while the young and hip are likely to spoon down Amaretto Fudge gelato beneath the chic swagger of the Caffè Graffiti sign. For visitors who like their European ambience minus the European tobacco smoke, Caffè Vittorio has a separate entrance to a no-smoking salon furnished in modernist glass and chrome. The Vittorio puts modern technology at the service of nostalgic sentiment: Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra and Vic Damone croon from the CD jukebox.

The social world of the North End has a distinctly European cast to it. The currency is American, the predominant language English, but the everyday pleasures, pace and diversions could as easily suggest modern Naples as Boston. For much of the summer, the neighborhood assumes an even stronger Old World character as benevolent religious societies mount feast-day festivals to honor Italian patron saints. These two- or three-day celebrations commence at the end of May and continue almost every weekend through August, hitting their climax during the combined feasts of San Antonio and Santa Lucia on Aug. 28-30 and Aug. 31, respectively, in 1992.

Members of the sponsoring societies retain the honor of bearing the saints' effigies on their shoulders through the neighborhood. Accompanied by small marching bands, each parade winds and weaves through the crowded streets, collecting dollar bills—and often larger denominations—for charity. Confetti rains down, people cheer each time the caravan halts, and households vie to outdo each other with their contributions. These feast-day processions have become extravaganzas of street theater that segue seamlessly into more secular revelry.

The street festivals that accompany the religious observations celebrate everything Italian—music, food and *dolce vita*—and they bring everyone in the North End out of their houses and into the streets. Once the parade disappears into the church, the party begins. Under the red, white and green bunting that envelops the neighborhood, the Italian passions for music and food take over. The incense of the fair is garlic and the food stalls bear signs that read like a grandmother's admonishment: "*Mangia, mangia!*" From the bandstand, the amplified trill of a mandolin cuts through the buoyant voices; the urge to dance can be overwhelming.

On festival days, everyone is Italian.

Patricia Harris and David Lyon are free-lance writers based in Cambridge, Mass.

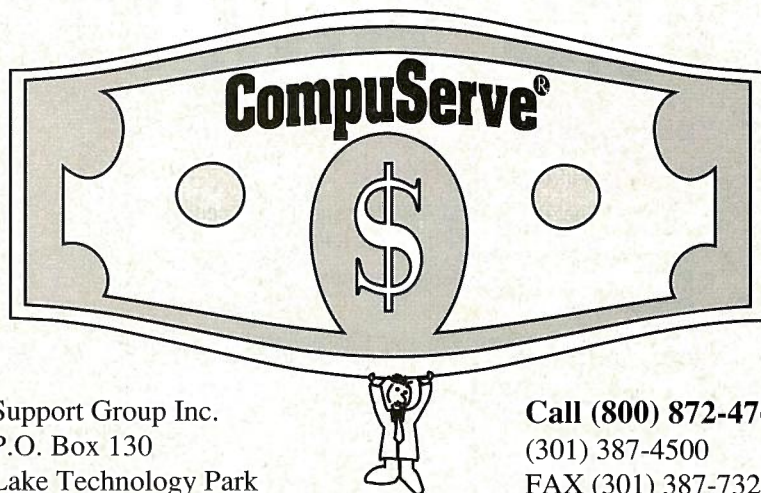


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When Bud Allen attended the Travel Forum's recent get-together in New York City, he stayed at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Times Square. The room's published rate was more than \$200 a night. While he was quoted a weekend rate of \$159, Allen paid just \$79.

Although most people don't realize it, paying for a hotel room is a lot like buying a car—the sticker price can be negotiated. "Most people assume renting a hotel room is a simple procedure," says Jerry Schneiderman, sysop of the Travel Forum (GO TRAVSIG) and bargainer extraordinaire. "You call the 800 number, tell when you'll be visiting, get the rate and perhaps a confirmation number, and then go on with your life." But why should you do this when you can routinely chip as much as 50 percent to 75

percent off the published room rate?

Hotels are willing to bargain because they need your business. "Hotel rooms, just like vegetables, are perishable. And when the veggie goes bad, or the hotel room goes unrented, the revenue from a lost sale can never be recovered," says Schneiderman.

In the hotel business, the published price is called the "rack rate," and it's much like a full-fare airline ticket. The only time you should have to pay this rate is during a peak period, such as in New Orleans during Mardi Gras or in Las Vegas during Comdex.

There are discounts available to special interest groups, such as the American Association of Retired Persons, the American Automobile Association and federal government employees. There also are weekend rates and half-price specials, as well as rates for frequent flyers, frequent hotel guests and frequent negotiators. But how do you bargain

with the desk clerk?

The hotel itself is likely to have better rates than the chain's toll-free 800 number, but your first call should be to the 800 number. Ask the rate, and then ask if there are any discounts you are eligible for. Tell the operator you can't afford the rack rate. Even if the rate is lowered, hang up politely. Then call the hotel directly. Repeat the procedure, and you're likely to get an even better rate.

But don't stop there. Tell the desk clerk the rate is too high. Speak to the reservations manager, and ask for a lower rate. Quote a better price from another hotel. If it's a personal trip, tell the manager you can't afford it; if it's business, say the company won't pay that much. "Tell them anything you care to. If the hotel doesn't think it will otherwise sell the room, it'll lower the price. It's that simple," says Schneiderman.

Almost all hotels will give anyone—business traveler or not—the corporate rate. You just have to ask for it. There is also the preferred rate, which is lower than corporate and is given to large, local companies and also is available if you push hard enough.

Weekend rates are usually half the price of weekday rates in hotels that cater to business travelers, especially in New York City, Chicago and Washington, D.C. You're more likely to get a lower rate if you begin this bargaining process as close to the date of your stay as possible. If you do it on the same day, you can often walk into the hotel, tell the reservations manager what you're willing to pay and work out a sweet deal. The more expensive the hotel, the more luck you'll have at lowering the rack rate and the bigger the discount you'll get.

Travel Forum member Allen routinely bargains for lower room rates, since he can't afford the prices of the hotels where he likes to stay. "I figure out what I can pay, call the hotel and explain what money is available. The hotel often makes a match or recommends a similar quality hotel for consideration," he says.

Although it's possible to bargain for lower rates in European hotels, success among Travel Forum members has been mixed. Often, they have to pay the rack rate but are able to negotiate special privileges, such as free use of the hotel copier, fax machine or meeting rooms.

Bargain shrewdly and you'll save big bucks. Says Schneiderman, "They'll take some money off faster than you can say 'Thanks, TRAVSIG!'" ◀

—Cathryn Conroy

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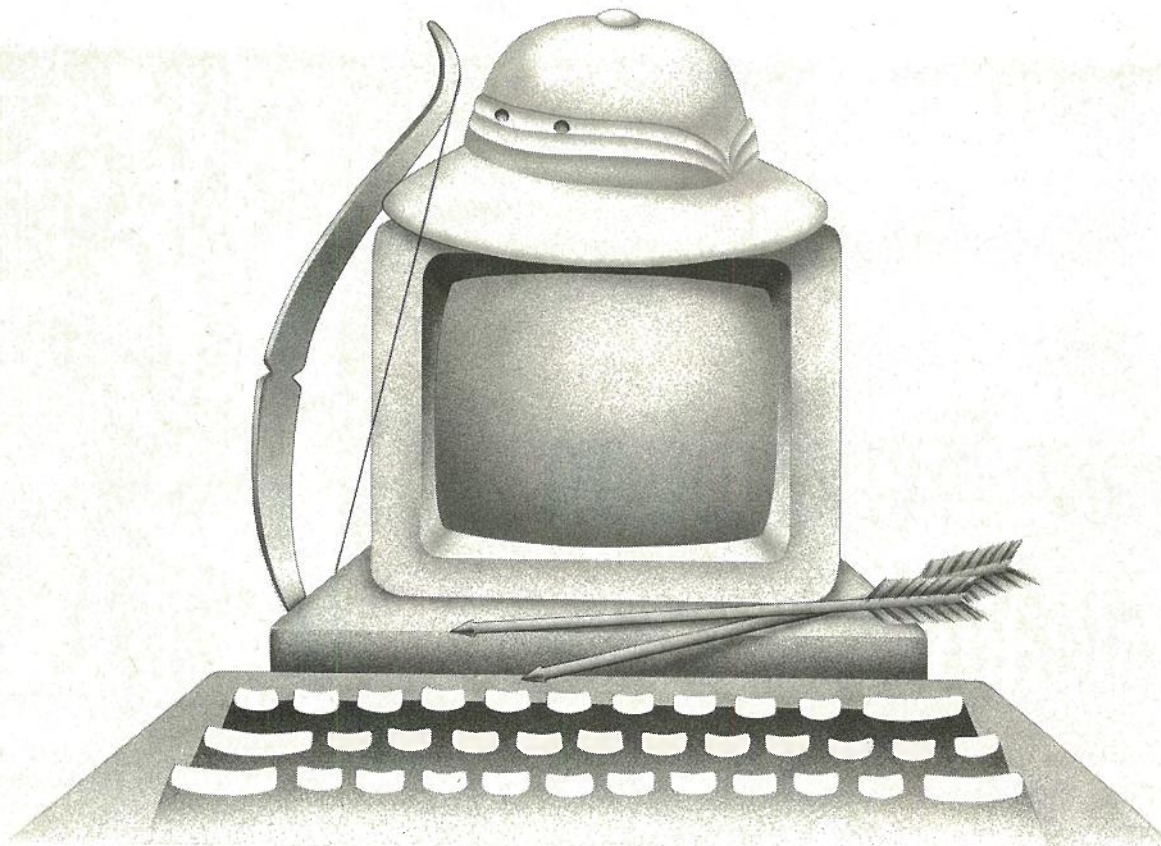
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▼
A Look at
Low-Tech Healing

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Real-Time Reports, p.42

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► Advice and dissent on 'alternative' medicine's range of therapies and philosophies are heard online.

When Susan Trotter feels a sore throat coming on, she heads for the kitchen and whips up a remedy she learned from an old Italian woman: Crumble sage leaves into melted butter, sauté until brown and pour the aromatic results over hot pasta. "Tastes good, relieves sore throats," she says.

Michael Aichlmayr, on the other hand, swears by an herbal tea of slippery elm bark, licorice root, wild-cherry bark, fennel seed, cinnamon bark, orange peel and althea root as a curative for a sore throat.

Valerie Ostroth keeps Chronic Fatigue Syndrome at bay with a battery of vitamin, mineral and dietary supplements. Don Goldberg recommends yoga training as a palliative for asthma, and cites studies to prove it. Mark Jimmerson is so sold on acupuncture that he plans to become a practitioner; and Richard Finkelstein will talk for hours about the benefits of homeopathic medicine and traditional Chinese healing arts.

All of these people are tapping into the emerging field of "alternative" medicine, that broad realm of therapies and practices that lie outside the boundaries of orthodox medicine. And they are talking about it online, exchanging information about practices ranging from chiropractic and osteopathy to herbalism, acupuncture and such exotica as "reflexology" (massaging the foot to heal the body) and "radiant healing."

With the costs of traditional medical care skyrocketing and the Baby Boom generation beginning to feel the aches and pains of middle age, interest in alternative medicine—and controversy over some of its more radical approaches—is booming.

As you'd expect with such a widespread



R. T. HICKS PHOTOGRAPHICS

Striking a balance is important: Blasdel

phenomenon, there's plenty of talk about alternative medicine on CompuServe. One of the centers of this online activity is the Health and Fitness Forum (GO GOOD-HEALTH), where Don Goldberg is leader of the Alternative Medicine section.

Goldberg, who was educated as a pharmacist and publishes a newsletter on alternative medicine, says many CompuServe members visit his section to learn more about alternative health remedies and to discuss ways to stay healthy through exercise and nutrition. The forum is also a gathering place for people who are already interested in the subject and want to share information.

"I regularly post summaries of published research and new developments on nutritional therapy and herbal remedies, and answer questions about various nutrients and supplements," Goldberg says, adding that the forum's Alternative Medicine library contains much basic information on the subject as well as collected forum message threads on controversial issues. "I try to present balanced and factual answers to the many questions posed by those who participate in the section," he says. "There is a time for orthodox medicine, and there is a time for alternatives."

Alternative medicine is appealing because it allows individuals to take control of their own health and medical care, says Finkelstein, a regular participant in the forum's discussions. "For the most part, these medicines have been around for hundreds, maybe even thousands, of years," says Finkelstein, who refers to the field as "complementary" medicine to underscore that it supplements but should not replace orthodox medicine. "The efficacy of these medicines has been proven millions of times through practice. We learn them culturally, and they are extremely effective because they reach back to our historical roots."

Finkelstein, a data-processing consultant

in Chicago, says health-care costs for himself, his wife, Julie, and their 5-year-old son, David, have dropped significantly since they became involved in homeopathic medicine, a practice involving tiny doses of substances that, in larger amounts, would cause symptoms similar to those of the disease being treated. "We feel that we are more in control of our health and feel more confident because of this," he says. "As a society, we're slowly but surely losing the knowledge of how to take care of everyday health problems ourselves, almost exclusively leaving them to medical doctors when they might be handled at home."

Finkelstein says his family pursues good health with three simple principles: Nutritious food, exercise and relaxation. Traditional physicians would not quarrel with that approach. However, most orthodox physicians, including some active members of the AMIA Medical Forum (GO MEDSIG), urge people to approach alternative medical practices with extreme caution, if at all.

"The so-called alternatives come on with beautiful promises and no objective data to back them up," says Dr. Neil Lombardi, a pediatric neurologist and medical director at St. Mary's Hospital for Children in Bayside, N.Y. "You would be surprised how little real data there is to support such conclusions." Dr. Scott Prior, a general practitioner in Norman Wells, Northwest Territories, Canada, adds, "I'll stick my neck out a bit further: I can make a case that 'alternative therapies' might even be dangerous. Despite a benign-sounding treatment, a patient consulting an 'alternative practitioner' and receiving one of these therapies might delay a definitive diagnosis and effective treatment."

For those reasons, managers of the Cancer Forum (GO CANCER) gently steer forum members away from untested alternative therapies, says Assistant Sysop Gene Feaster, a retired medical physicist with experience in radiation therapy. "Yes, people should have the freedom of choice, but opting out of the traditional medical protocols is almost certainly the fastest way I know of to lose the battle against cancer."

Cancer Forum member Carolyn Blasdel, an oncology nurse, strongly advises that people with serious illnesses rely on orthodox medicine, but she sees some benefits to alternative treatments. "I find visualization and meditation useful when I am sick or in pain," she says, "and I have used The Electronic Mall to order books and tapes. But, I also get conventional treatment. I have seen people with cancer spend a lot of money on various herbs, vitamins and glandular extracts, and still die."

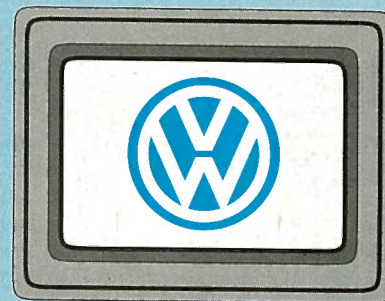
"In fairness, I must say that for some people, conventional treatment doesn't do any good either," she says. "It does seem that such things as a positive attitude, visualizations, affirmations, healthy diet and reasonable exercise do at least make quality of life

a little better."

"I have no problem with folks supplementing solidly provable treatment with alternative help," says Feaster. But he adds that even apparently harmless supplements, such as megavitamin doses, can damage organs or mask symptoms, and should be used only under a physician's advice.

CompuServe's alternative-medicine enthusiasts apparently don't disagree with that prudent counsel, as far as life-threatening ailments go. But they're eagerly exchanging notions and nostrums for minor pains, illness prevention and the promotion of general good health. More serious subjects such as pain relief for diabetes or the controlled use of marijuana to alleviate the side effects of chemotherapy also are discussed.

"In the Diabetes Forum (GO DIABETES), we have a distrust for alternative medicine," says Sysop Dave Groves, an insulin-dependent diabetic for 37 years. "We walk a tight highwire. The medics tell us we can live 'normal' lives, but then give us a list of what we can and cannot do." With diabetes the seventh leading killer in the United States, most "alternative" treatment is regarded with skepticism, he says. Nevertheless, some forum members have reported good results with acupuncture, hypnosis and other alternative arts to help deal with some of the



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Perkier Pets and Their New Age Vets

Corky Granfield has been eating a strict natural diet lately, and it has worked wonders. He has shed a persistent virus, improved his appetite, and is passing all of his blood tests. He even *looks* healthy. Corky, in short, is a testament to the effectiveness of alternative medical approaches ... and he's not even human.

"Corky is our miracle case," says a proud Luke Granfield, a regular participant in the Pets Forum (GO PETS). Since Granfield put Corky on an all-natural diet of raw meat, fresh grains and vegetables, Granfield's feline friend "has gone from a cat with a raggedy, dandruffy, well-bitten coat to a luxurious, silky and extremely vital animal."

Not satisfied to leave today's increasing interest in alternative, nontraditional therapies to mere humans, many Pets Forum "regulars" are seeking new health directions for their beloved animal companions. While much ground remains unbroken in the realms of radiance, reflexology and even homeopathic treatment for Fido or Fluffy, the animal lovers in the forum frequently exchange information and success stories about acupuncture, natural diet and nutrition, and even hypnosis for their pets.

Al Guden's 19-year-old thoroughbred

showed his age by declining to jump fences, a sport he had enjoyed. A quick insertion of three acupuncture needles near the horse's hip, however, seemed to restore his youth. "I rode the horse later that evening, and you would have thought you were on a 6-year-old," Guden says.

Jessica Ostrow's Hlao-Roo, a mix of shepherd, coonhound, husky, Labrador retriever and more, was slowing down a step or two at age 14. Ostrow found a vet near her home in Texas who suggested trying Roo on a round of acupuncture with a bit of canine chiropractic, and it worked wonders. "The acupuncture is helping her a lot. She's moving around *much* better now, and her attitude is good," Ostrow says.

The treatment involves inserting fine needles at carefully chosen points, along with injections of herbal compounds and vitamin B-12, she says. Roo also gets a ration of vitamins C and E ... and lots of love, of course.

'Ciao' to chow:
Corky



TIGER TRIBE

Alternative Uploads: Forum Files

Whatever your interest in alternative medicine—whether it's an herbal remedy, a discussion of the pros and cons on the subject, or an overview of the use of marijuana as a legitimate treatment for glaucoma or the side effects of cancer treatment—you'll find it covered in the variety of files available in the forums. Here's a sample:

HEALTH AND FITNESS FORUM (GO GOODHEALTH)

Medicinal Herbs—Large text file containing the descriptions and properties of hundreds of herbs and therapeutic oils. Library 8, "Alternative Health," PHYTO.TXT.

Arthritis—A collection of alternative remedies for arthritis pain. Library 8, ARTHRI.TXT.

Green Tea—Description of the purportedly healthy properties of green tea. Library 8, GREEN.TXT.

Holistic Health—Number and address to call for references to practitioners throughout the United States. Library 8, REFRES.TXT.

CANCER FORUM (GO CANCER)

Cancer Treatments Evaluated—A

study by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment of "unconventional" cancer treatments. Library 8, "Research Library," UNCONV.TXT.

HUMAN SEXUALITY FORUM (GO HSX-100)

Nutrition for AIDS Patients—Reviews of books on both "mainstream" and "alternative" nutrition. Library 13, "Living with AIDS," NUTRIT.TXT.

Marijuana Benefits—A background paper from the Washington-based Marijuana AIDS Research Service. Contains basic information on the medical utility of marijuana by people with AIDS and other such life- and sense-threatening diseases. Library 13, MJ.BKG.TXT.

Alternative AIDS Treatments—Information on alternative treatments for HIV- and AIDS-related illnesses, ranging from vitamin C to garlic and Chinese herbs. Library 13, ALTERN.ATE.

GARDENING FORUM (GO GARDEN)

American Indian Cures—Description of a Seneca Indian folk cure, the four-day "cleansing fast." Library 4, "Herbs,"

SENECA.TXT.

Garlic—Clinical studies evaluating the use of garlic as a folk remedy for a wide variety of ailments. Library 4, GARLIC.TXT.

Obesity—Discussion of herbal remedies as an alternative to amphetamines in suppressing appetite to promote weight loss. Library 4, SUPRES.TXT.

Indigestion—Natural remedies for stomach problems. Library 4, TUMMY.TXT.

Safety—How to use herbal medicines safely. Library 4, HERBAL.TXT.

DIABETES FORUM (GO DIABETES)

Protein and Diabetes—A lengthy discussion thread on protein and diet for the diabetic. Library 7, "Diet and Exercise," DIET.THD.

Diets—Consumer protection information on diets. Library 7, DIETPG.FTC.

Fast Food—Nutritional information on McDonald's menu items, including information for diabetic diets. Library 7, MCDNLD.PCF.

Recipe Programs for Diabetic Diets—Recipe Analyst 1.81 program, for MS-DOS (RECIPE.ZIP); DietAid Dietary Planner, for MS-DOS (DIETA1.ARC); weight, exercise and diet tracking program, for MS-DOS (LEAN15.ZIP); and a Mac program for determining American Diabetes Association "exchanges" in diet planning (EXCALC.SIT). All files are in Library 7.

NEW AGE FORUM (GO NEWAGE)

Acupressure—A HyperCard stack discussing acupressure and showing points for specific problems. Shareware. Macintosh. Library 3, "Programs/Mac," ACUSTK.BIN.

painful and purportedly untreatable side effects of the illness.

Diabetes Forum staff member Tracey Agnew says she has "run the gamut with neurologists" in search of help for debilitating pain in her arms and legs, and soon plans to try acupuncture. "I am also an herb junkie," she says. "I use various Chinese or South American herbs for stimulants, ginger for nausea, valerian as a relaxant, red clover for constipation, and liquid chlorophyll every day as a tonic."

Members of CompuServe's Gardening Forum (GO GARDEN) also are ardent herbalists, with remedies ranging from Trotter's herb pasta and Aichlmayr's herb tea to the pungent advice of member Reuben M. Gerling, reporting in with an Oriental remedy from his home in Japan: "Horseradish is unbelievable! It is an antibiotic and good for numerous ailments. My cold medicine clears your sinuses in no time and, if too strong,

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Read More About It

CompuServe's Magazine Database Plus and Health Database Plus offer a wealth of information about alternative medicine online. These surcharged services (25 cents per minute plus \$1.50 per full-text article retrieved, and in Health Database, \$1 for summaries retrieved) are searchable by keyword.

Here are some samples of the many magazine articles on the subject available for downloading:

MAGAZINE DATABASE PLUS (GO MAGDB)

"Wonder Cures from the Fringe" (holistic medicine), *U.S. News & World Report*, Sept. 23, 1991, v. 111, n. 13, p. 68(1). Reference #A11256504.

"Harvesting Drugs from Plants" (includes related information on original research at FDA), *FDA Consumer*, Oct. 1990, v. 24, n. 8, p. 20(3). Reference #A9073340.

"Dangerous Doctors & Phony Cures" (includes information on protecting yourself), *Redbook*, Oct. 1990, v. 175, n. 6, p. 54(4). Reference #A9374999.

"Healing Hands" (non-contact therapeutic touch), *Psychology Today*, July-Aug. 1989, v. 23, n. 7-8, p. 28(2). Reference #A7983835.

HEALTH DATABASE PLUS (GO HLTDB)

"Physicians and Healers—Unwitting Partners in Health Care," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, Jan. 2, 1992, v. 326, n. 1, p. 61(4). Reference #A11769502.

"Non-traditional Appeal: Alternative Doctors Tell Why Some Patients Favor Their Practices" (Business: Your Changing Prac-

tice), *American Medical News*, Nov. 25, 1991, v. 34, n. 44, p. 13(4). Reference #A11548481.

"The Health-fraud Cops: Are They Quack Busters, Consumer Advocates or Medical McCarthyites?" (cover story), *Vegetarian Times*, Aug. 1991, n. 168, p. 48(13). Reference #A11098546.

"Alternative Medicine Also Has Its Abundance of Unethical Sharks, Charlatans and Quacks" (includes related articles on quackery and advertising, dental fillings, acupuncture and growth hormone treatments for aging), *Nutrition Health Review*, Fall 1990, n. 56, p. 2(2). Reference #A9164594.

"Prevalence of Non-conventional Medical Treatments in HIV-infected Patients: Implications for Primary Care" (Weekly Research Report), *CDC AIDS Weekly*, June 18, 1990, p. 17(1). Reference #A9111563.

"Alternatives for Athletes: Natural Remedies Can be Effective for Sports Injuries," *East West*, June 1990, v. 20, n. 6, p. 34(3). Reference #A8480856.

"Be on the Lookout for Health Frauds, Quacks" (includes related article), *Diabetes in the News*, March-April 1990, v. 9, n. 2, p. 10(3). Reference #A8968731.

"The Sneezing Season: Alternatives to Aspirin for Weathering Colds and Flu" (includes related information), *Bestways*, Jan. 1990, v. 18, n. 1, p. 16(8). Reference #A891-1319.

"Healing your Family's Colds," *Mothering*, Winter 1990, n. 54, p. 32(6). Reference #A8283159.

"Natural Headache Cures" (postural correction, relaxation techniques, self-massage and acupressure), *Medical SelfCare*, Nov.-Dec. 1989, n. 53, p. 24(7). Reference #A802-

clears everything else as well."

Gardening Forum member Judy White advises a sip or two of liquid aloe juice for gastrointestinal distress, and Heather Markle wants everyone to know that plantain, a common garden weed, is a fine remedy for itchy bug bites. "In the wild, you can just chew up a fresh leaf and apply it to the bite," she says. "It's kind of gross, but better than itching."

Native Americans have long known the benefits of herbal cures, says Judy Cone, who discusses them in the Native American section of the Issues Forum (GO ISSUES). She swears by an Iroquois remedy—common milkweed boiled in two changes of water and eaten like asparagus—as an effective treatment for premenstrual syndrome.

Another online center for the discussion of alternative medicine is the New Age Forum (GO NEWAGE), where Sysop Rilla Moulden offers the Diet/Health section as "a

place to come and find out about alternative healing methods." Moulden and her husband, Ray, practice "Radiance," also known as "Reiki," which she describes as an Oriental term for a "universal energy" that surrounds the body. Practitioners place "attuned" hands on the body in an effort to balance and control this energy to heal the body and make it whole.

Members of the Living with AIDS section of the Human Sexuality Forum (GO HSX-100) quietly share information on the therapeutic use of marijuana, says Alice O'Leary, a forum participant and spokeswoman for the Marijuana AIDS Research Service in Washington, D.C. Although 34 states have legalized the use of marijuana as a "drug of medical necessity," making it available to people with cancer or glaucoma, many people are reluctant to ask about it because the topic is controversial, she says.

PERSONAL BUSINESS

"The climate of fear in the United States is quite real," she says. "CompuServe offers many people the chance to

learn about marijuana's medical value without putting themselves on record."

The topic of alternative medicine will likely continue to elicit both online queries concerning its methods and controversy over its merits. Health and Fitness Forum's Goldberg hopes the conventional "allopathic" and alternative schools of thought can find some common ground in the exchange. "There is really no reason why the two cannot coexist harmoniously. The emphasis on prevention, and on treating the whole person and the cause of the disease, are certainly goals worthy of both approaches."

Robin Garr, a writer who lives in New York, is associate sysop of the Bacchus Wine Forum. His CompuServe User ID number is 76702,764.



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"Understanding Alternative Therapies Often Used to Fight HIV Infection" (column), *AIDS Alert*, Oct. 1989, v. 4, n. 10, p. 170(4). Reference #A8033747.

"Reflexology" (includes information on finding a reflexologist), *Bestways*, Oct. 1989, v. 17, n. 10, p. 36(3). Reference #A7994589.

by Dan Kening

Instant Replay

► Real-time sports forums' reports get members behind the scenes.

It's a beautiful day for racing at Florida's Gainesville Raceway. You await the start of qualifying round three in Top Fuel at the National Hot Rod Association Motorcraft Gatornationals, pitting Kenny Bernstein against Al Segrini. The track announcer is opining that it's unlikely that the 300 mph barrier will be broken this round, when Bernstein's car leaps off the pad and disappears—tail header flames visible above the rear wing—as Segrini's car loses traction after just 100 feet. Less than five seconds later, everyone's eyes shift to the scoreboard: 301.7 mph. It's a milestone in drag racing history.

What a day to be at the track!

But you're not actually at the track. Instead you're at your computer, vicariously experiencing auto racing's thrills, thanks to the real-time reports filed by the intrepid on-site race correspondents from Racing Information Systems (RIS), which operates CompuServe's Motor Sports Forum (GO RACING). The Sailing Forum (GO SAILING) provided another example of the potential of real-time reporting in its same-day coverage of the America's Cup trial races in San Diego.

"We perceive ourselves in the Motor Sports Forum as the first truly modern wire service because of the capabilities for instantaneous feedback," says Motor Sports Forum Sysop Mike Hollander. "You can ask questions of the reporters online, before, after and—sometimes—during a race. That's something you can't do with reporters from the AP, UPI or Reuters."

Motor Sports and Sailing Forum members say such immediate and detailed coverage of races is lacking in the traditional media. "I haven't seen any coverage in the daily or weekly press that comes close to the

robustness of the Sailing Forum reporting," says forum member Bob Trenkamp. "During the America's Cup races, we were treated to outstanding, timely reporting not available elsewhere. We also had a few folks pounce on the reporters on the few occasions when the reports lagged."

"Most motorcycle races go unnoticed by the mainstream media," according to Keith Patti, Motor Sports Forum motorcycle editor and race reporter, "and the enthusiast publications have a lag time that can be months. In contrast, in most cases motorcycle race results can be found in the Motor Sports Forum within minutes of the checkered flag."

Working for free, RIS reporters cover races around the world, whether stocks, dragsters, IndyCars, motorcycles or Formula One racers. They provide not only a list of top finishers but also the total finishing agate or statistical "fine print," quotes from drivers

PERSONAL BUSINESS

and season totals.

How these correspondents provide CompuServe members with racing reports is nearly as heroic as the events they cover. With his laptop in tow, Larry Sullivan, Motor Sports Forum drag racing editor, uses DragTrak, a special database/notepad program he developed, to help him keep up with the lightning-fast pace of the sport as he uploads reports to the forum's Section 6, "NHRA/Drags/SCTA/LSR."

Prior to motorcycle races, Patti walks through the pits, interviewing riders, sponsors, crew chiefs and race officials. After filing several race updates from his laptop during the race, he uploads more interviews and the final agate information.

While most motor sports tracks around the world offer full use of press box amenities to the RIS/CompuServe reporters, sometimes it takes a bit of ingenuity to get race results online immediately. While covering a race at a small Virginia track, Bill McClintock, the forum's NASCAR and Stocks section leader, discovered that the only phone line was being used by a local broadcaster. It was an important race, and there was no national radio or TV coverage scheduled. Suddenly a Rube Goldberg-like contingency plan popped into McClintock's head. "I called another RIS reporter in Toronto and gave him the play-by-play over a pay phone from which I could barely see the action," he recalls. "It was a challenge, not only trying to follow the cars but also yelling over the noise—all the while keeping at bay a bunch of increasingly angry would-be phone patrons. But we got the race on!"

After discovering that many Japanese racing circuits lacked phone lines in their press boxes, RIS Japanese race correspondent Mitsuru Sugaya, who also serves as NIFTY-Serve's Auto Racing Forum sysop,



CHARLES B. KNIGHT/INTERNATIONAL STOCK

Where to Look Online

Updated motor racing reports can be found in a variety of sections in the Motor Sports Forum: Section 2, "IMSA Series"; Section 3, "NASCAR & Stocks"; Section 4, "PPG/IndyCars/Lites"; Section 5, "SCCA Pro Racing"; Section 6, "NHRA/Drags/SCTA/LSR"; Section 7, "SCAA Road Race/Solo"; Section 8, "Oval Track"; Section 10, "F-1/International"; and Section 11, "Motorcycle Racing." Edited summaries are uploaded to the corresponding libraries for archival purposes.

Similarly, as-it-happens race reports are uploaded to special message areas in the Sailing Forum and are later archived in the libraries. Section 5, "Racing & Regattas"; Section 10, "BOC Race"; Section 11, "America's Cup"; Section 13, "Cape Horn Challenge"; and Section 16, "Whitbread Race."

now packs a cellular phone along with his laptop.

Cellular phones connected to modems also provided the link to CompuServe on the Sailing Forum during the America's Cup trials. Sysop Keith Taylor was thus able to report on the races from both the media boat and the media center ashore.

"Our information was generally available two or three hours after the end of racing—eight to 12 hours before the next day's daily papers and with immensely more detail," he says. "While we competed with ESPN and other television networks around the world for live coverage, we still had the advantage that we could provide a unique perspective. Also, we can answer our members' questions while the races are still going on."

In addition to the real-time race information, which is eagerly devoured by fans, in the Motor Sports Forum you'll find a number of racing professionals online, including drivers, team owners and sponsors, racetrack and racing organization officials, and journalists. The forum often proves helpful to them as well.

One of the jobs of Bill King, Goodyear racing public relations manager, is to file reports for company personnel each Sunday night covering every major race Goodyear was involved in during the week. "Before discovering CompuServe, it took me literally hours and numerous hit-and-miss calls to obtain information for even a partial report," he says. "Now I not only have the racing world at the tip of my modem, but also I can keep track throughout the weekend of pre-race happenings, practice and qualifying times, as well as notes and quotes. Thanks to the RIS reporters, the people who read my weekly report think I'm magic."

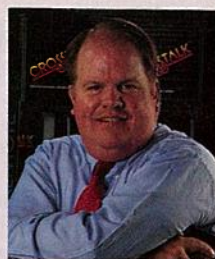
So far real-time reporting on CompuServe has just scratched the surface. According to the Sailing Forum's Taylor, in addition to race reporting, another application of real-time reporting on the forum was an online conference between school children taking part in the Student Ocean Challenge project and racers in the 1990-91 BOC challenge solo race around the world. In the Motor Sports Forum, live conferences, in which top drivers answer questions right from the track, are scheduled at selected events during the racing season.

Says Hollander, "As more and more people discover the narrowcasting capabilities of CompuServe, real-time reporting will become increasingly important."

Dan Kening is a free-lance writer based in Chicago. He is a regular contributor to The Chicago Tribune.

That's 'Mr. Real-Time' to You

If anyone knows the value of real-time reporting it's CompuServe's resident "Master of Disaster," Shel Hall. At times, the Atlanta-based Automobile Forum sysop has pulled double duty: overseeing "crisis forums" dealing with the 1989 San Francisco earthquake, the Persian Gulf War and the breakup of the former Soviet Union.



TOMMY THOMPSON

Going live: Hall

Hall got his feet wet with the Earthquake Forum, which was formed to provide real-time news about the quake and to aid with communications services for CompuServe members in the quake area.

Perhaps most dramatic of all was the Gulf Crisis Forum, formed the day after Operation Desert Shield turned into Operation Desert Storm. According to Hall, the forum had 300 messages within its first 24 hours, and within a week was handling 700 messages a day.

One of the real-time highlights of the forum was provided by Israeli CompuServe member Erez Webman. "Sitting in his

sealed room, he accessed the Gulf Forum conference area and reported that an Iraqi scud missile had just landed in the street outside," recalls Hall. "Fortunately, it bounced and blew up a vacant lot."

When hardliners attempted a coup against former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Hall was once again called on to do an instant forum, the Soviet Crisis Forum, which is still active. Among the reporters was Bob Clough, an American working for a U.S. software company's Moscow office, who offered comments and news. As it evolved, the forum broadened to cover all of Eastern Europe, and received daily dispatches via Internet from a member in war-torn Croatia. Hall says CompuServe members have responded favorably to the various crisis forums. "CompuServe members absolutely love knowing stuff that the television networks don't—that's why they subscribe in the first place."

—DK

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More Fun Up Front

► Fans of CompuServe's multiplayer games are updating their look.

A typographical error is usually no big deal. At least, that's what Matt Dorsche thought ... until he was killed by one.

Dorsche plays *Island of Kesmai*, one of CompuServe's many multiplayer online games. He'd wander through the catacombs, chanting spells, slaying evil creatures and watching out for dragons. But the greatest obstacles were the ASCII graphics used in the game. These simple symbols found on a standard typewriter keyboard represent the game's creatures and boundaries. And it is sometimes difficult to realize that an on-screen [is really a stone barrier.

"One of my more prominent problems while playing *Island of Kesmai* is that I tend to run into walls," Dorsche explains. "Everybody does it. This wouldn't be so bad, but when you do run into a wall, you get stunned for at least one round, which can seriously mess up your day."

Dorsche decided to write a front-end for the game, a program that would translate the game's simple ASCII symbols into color-

ful reference maps in the top corner of his computer screen. Better yet, he wanted his maps to make a warning sound when he was about to go WHUMP!—the word the game displays when a player hits a wall. With a warning, he'd be less subject to death by typographical error.

Caught up by the challenge, Dorsche began writing the IBM-compatible program in Turbo Pascal, listening to suggestions from his high school computer science teacher. Dorsche also dropped by Borland's programming forums for help with a communications driver. His completed program, called *The Guide*, has been downloaded by hundreds of grateful *Island of Kesmai* players.

Several other enthusiastic players of online games have written graphical front-end systems to make game play more intuitive and easier to learn. Many of these front-ends are in the libraries of the Multiplayer Games Forum (GO MPGAMES). "Most multiplayer games are designed so that all sorts of machines can access them," says Bruce Linton, associate sysop, also known as "Bonsai." "Front-end programs are machine-

specific, and allow players to use the power and color capabilities of their computer."

Most front-end programs offer extensive macros. For instance, a once-lengthy chant can be reduced to a single keystroke to get a character out of a jam. "Macros can be life-savers for any class of character," says Debbie Deutsch, an avid *Island* player. "Most folks have a macro that tells their character to remove his recall ring, whisking the character from great danger to safety without fear of a typo."

Front-ends also can handle some of the game's "housekeeping" chores. Since *The Guide* works only on IBM-compatible computers, another player wrote an *IOK* front-end for his Amiga. David Oldis' Aterm front-end program offers "sack management" for keeping track of loot, or remembering what tools are hanging from a character's belt. It also offers a timer, letting players know when they can "double hit" a fighting creature for additional power.

Since CompuServe's ASCII-based online games can be played using any brand of computer, a player can log on with a

CompuServe's New Entertainment Center

While its members write front-ends for their favorite multiplayer adventures, CompuServe offers a few full-color graphical front-ends of its own. CompuServe's new Entertainment Center (GO ECENTER), with programs written by William Sellers of S&S Synergy, allows members to compete in an outer space shoot-'em-up or a

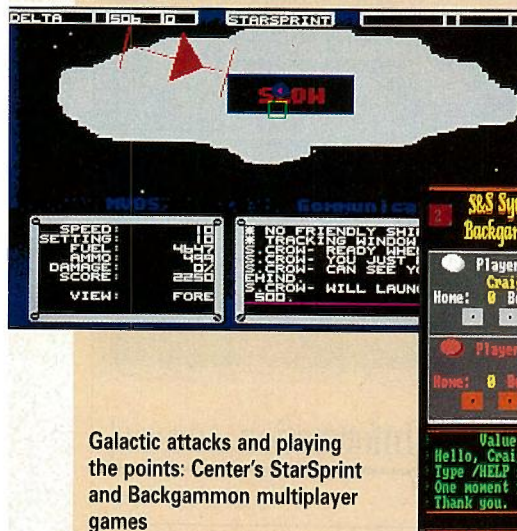
friendly game of backgammon.

Dropping by the Entertainment Center, members can chat among themselves in a conferencing lobby, with the same commands used in the CB Simulator. But unlike CB, the banter is merely a prelude: Players or teams kick on the game software (for IBM PCs and compatibles with EGA graphics or better) and join each other in roaming the galaxy in *StarSprint* or playing backgammon's points.

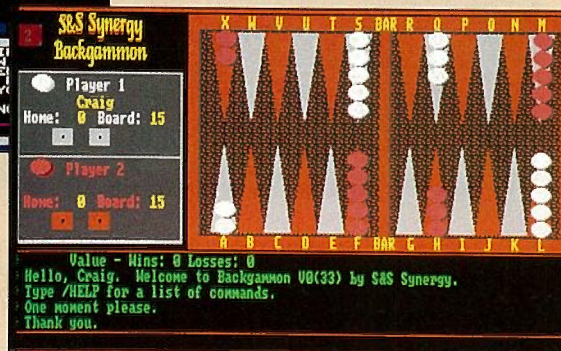
Before playing the games for the first time, members must choose the Download Software

option from the Lobby menu. The software for *StarSprint* costs \$2; the software for backgammon is \$1, and online charges are suspended while the game downloads.

Once members have downloaded one or both games, they can enter the Entertainment Center 24 hours a day to find competitors. Both games interface with the CompuServe Information Manager software for easy access, although CIM isn't required to play. Players can start their own game, join a game already in progress or simply watch until they get the hang of it. Private games are available, too (games other players can't join at will), and other games will be added soon. The Entertainment Center has the same pricing policy as the CB Club. Players have three options: They can play at the standard connect-time rates, or join the CB Club and choose between two club rate packages—a \$25 monthly fee allows members to play in the Entertainment Center for \$4.30 per hour, and an \$85 monthly fee allows members to play in the Entertainment Center for only 30 cents an hour. Those choosing the CB Club prices can't log on with a modem faster than 2400 baud, but all three options let you play 24 hours a day.



Galactic attacks and playing the points: Center's *StarSprint* and Backgammon multiplayer games



—RAR

Graphic Gaming: Front-End Files

Many players of CompuServe's online games have written their own front-ends to make the games easier to play. Some front-ends convert the games' ASCII symbols into an easier-to-read graphic display; others help keep track of inventories or automate tedious tasks. Here is a look at some of the front-end programs available in the libraries of CompuServe's Multiplayer Games Forum (GO MPGAMES). Except where noted, all files are in Library 4, "Island of Kesmai/Beginners."

The Guide—Designed for *Island of Kesmai* users, this IBM-compatible program lets players (with EGA graphics capability or better) display online maps with descriptions. It also keeps statistics, replays customizable macros for chants and spells, contains a notepad and performs other handy tasks. Version 2.7. Shareware. THEGUI.ZIP.

Updated BG Maps—Version 3.5.2 of the below-ground maps to be used with The

Guide version 2.7 when playing *Island of Kesmai*. Several locations have been updated. Shareware. GBGMA.ZIP.

Updated AG Maps—Version 3.5 of the above-ground maps to be used with The Guide when playing *Island of Kesmai*. Includes descriptions file, and won't work with versions of The Guide earlier than version 2.7. Shareware. TGAGMA.ZIP.

KTerm—This front-end for *Island of Kesmai* works on any Macintosh that has 128K ROM and System 4.2 or later, although System 6.0.3 or later is recommended. It supports auto-rolling, function keys, integrated mapping and the Kesmai Terminal Protocol. Freeware. KTERM.SIT.

KTerm Maps—Surface and dungeon maps to be used with KTerm or KPlus. Freeware. KPESM.ARC.

Aterm—This Amiga front-end for *Island of Kesmai* has a timer, clock, function keys, auto-targeting and enhanced movement controls. Shareware. ATERM.LZH.

GKTerm—This IBM-compatible front-end for *Island of Kesmai* runs under Windows and provides color-coded statistics and monster information, scroll-back message buffer and graphical map manager. Freeware. GKTERM.ZIP

MapMan—A map maker for use with GKTerm. Version 2.20. Freeware. MAPMAN.ZIP.

Maps for GKTerm—The latest set of maps for GKTerm to be used with MapMan 2.20; will not work with previous versions. Freeware. GKMAPS.ZIP.

ATScope—A graphics front-end for *Air Traffic Controller*, it runs on IBM-compatibles with EGA or VGA graphics. Self-extracting compressed file. Library 14, "Other Games," ATSCPX.EXE.

Scope—A graphics front-end for *Sniper!* war simulation. For IBM-compatibles with EGA or VGA graphics. Can be downloaded from the Scope area (GO SCOPE).

Macintosh and compete against someone using an Amiga. Because of the games' multiplayer features, players can chat when not taking pot shots at one another. To keep the game ASCII-based, visuals are kept to a minimum. Some commands can be clumsy and difficult to remember.

"Front-ends help novices with confusing command syntax problems," says Stingray!, a game operator for *MegaWars I*. "The graphics, although not quite *Star Wars*, are an improvement over the standard output."

CompuServe's venerable *MegaWars III*, one of the first and largest multiplayer online games, was introduced almost 10 years ago, but its concept is still fresh. Each month, players cruise their ships through uncharted regions of the galaxy, fending off attackers while searching for planets to colonize. They track their planets' populations and tend to their economies. After a month, the player with the most wealth and power becomes president of the Imperial Senate.

Since some players have been playing *MegaWars III* for years, they've watched as today's graphic and sound-packed games make *MegaWars III* look more and more like a bunch of brackets and punctuation symbols. Long-time player Doug Banker wrote the front-end Copilot to help bring *MegaWars III* up to date. "I decided to write Copilot because I fell in love with *MegaWars III* the first time I played almost 10 years ago, and I wanted to give something back," Banker says. "The *MegaWars III* concept is ageless."

PERSONAL BUSINESS

But the game was not, and constructing a front-end was the obvious way to keep it current.

Copilot's a salvation to many players. It puts a dashboard on the user's screen, with gas and temperature gauges, status windows, function lights and other features. Changing colors and sounds alert the pilot to changing conditions that need attention. It can keep track of locations, and guard against some common mistakes.

The advantage gained in the games by being able to shoot out macros or have planet maintenance and even spaceship piloting done automatically is a bone of contention often picked at by some. "Front-ends are unfair," says a *MegaWar III* player called !Avenger! "I use absolutely no crutches, and I do reasonably well. I don't even use macros. But I used to be a top-of-the-line space pilot, and now I am mediocre."

It is ultimately a matter of choice, sticking with the tried-and-true or adopting the power and ease of a specialized interface, with graphics like those of the Entertainment Center (see "CompuServe's New Entertainment Center," p. 44), which are now the standard issue in online gaming.

"I think front-ends are fantastic," says Chris Eisnaugle, author of GKTerm, an *IOK* front-end update for Windows. "I'll take graphics any day." ◀

R. Andrew Rathbone, author of The Computer Gamer's Bible, is a free-lance writer based in San Diego. His CompuServe User ID number is 75300,1565.

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Following are summaries of software reviews available for reading this month in *Online Today*. To read the complete reviews, use the GO commands listed at the end of each summary.

Upgraded, Improved Windows

Windows 3.1 (Microsoft Corp.) is a major upgrade of the popular graphical computing environment for IBM computers. The new version features better multitasking of both Windows and DOS applications, True Type scalable fonts and a much-improved File Manager, along with other enhancements. Reviewer Harry Green says Windows 3.1 prints faster, runs better and causes fewer conflicts with his network and other software. However, he says Windows 3.1 requires a lot of memory and disk space, and an experienced computer user to install correctly.

For more information, visit the Microsoft forums (GO MICROSOFT). To read the review, GO OLT-3735.



New Integrated Software

BeagleWorks 1.0 (Beagle Bros. Inc.) is an integrated word processor, database, spreadsheet, drawing, charting and communications package for Macintosh computers. Its word processor features a 100,000-word spell checker and large thesaurus, and its spreadsheet module can handle up to 256 columns by 16,384 rows. Reviewer Anthony Watkins found the communications module weak, but rated all of the other modules from good to excellent. He says the program compared favorably to other popular "works" packages recently introduced. GO OLT-3745

Creative Effects for Type

Makeup for Windows 1.0 (Bitstream Inc.), a special-effects text generator for

Microsoft Windows, can be used to create customized logos, illustrations and other type treatments. The program supports 20 graphic file formats and includes a library of clip art. Reviewer Franklyn Jones says the program is easy enough for novices, but it really shines in the hands of a professional graphics designer. He applauds the program's flexibility, but says it is sometimes difficult to find information in the documentation, which is otherwise very good. GO OLT-3755

Flexible File Converter

Software Bridge 5.1 (Systems Compatibility Corp.) can convert files automatically among a wide variety of file formats on IBM computers. It includes support for 30 word processor formats, 15 database formats and 13 spreadsheet formats. It also can convert IBM-compatible files to and from formats used by some Macintosh applications. The program can often preserve formatting information during conversions. Reviewer Franklyn Jones says the program is extremely easy to use. He concludes that it is a useful product, especially for companies converting from one application standard to another. GO OLT-3765

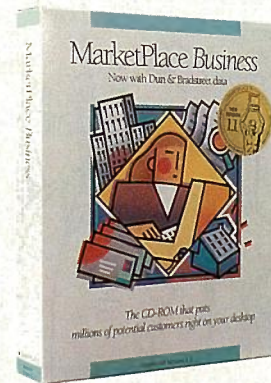
Another File Converter

ConvertPerfect 1.0 (WordPerfect Corp.) also translates files from one word processor format to another. Although it doesn't work with database and spreadsheet files, as does Software Bridge (above), it claims to do a better job retaining formatting information in the file. Reviewer James Moran says the program is so easy to learn that no manual is included and the online help is rarely necessary. Also, ConvertPerfect is one of the least expensive file conversion utilities available.

For more information, visit the WordPerfect Support Group B Forum (GO WPSGB). To read the review, GO OLT-3775.

Computerized Forms

FormWorx for Windows version 2.0 (PowerUp Software Corp.), a forms generator and manager for Microsoft Windows, consists of three modules: Form Publisher creates and modifies forms. Fill & File fills forms on the computer and can use data in a database for some or all information. Forms on Demand is a collection of ready-made forms to use or modify. Reviewer Harry Green says FormWorx and its object-oriented drawing package take only a few minutes to learn, and the program is an effective tool for virtually every business. GO OLT-3805



Automating Windows

E'vent Manager (Merisoft Corp.), a utility program for Windows, can create and run both macros and agents. Macros are multiple commands, often involving one or more applications, that can be started with a single keystroke or mouse click. Agents are macros that start because of the state of the computer's hardware and software. Reviewer Hardin Brothers applauds the program for its flexibility and power. He says it is easy to learn and use despite its internal complexity. He reports that the program has some bugs, but he still finds it an excellent value. GO OLT-3815

Easy Data Management

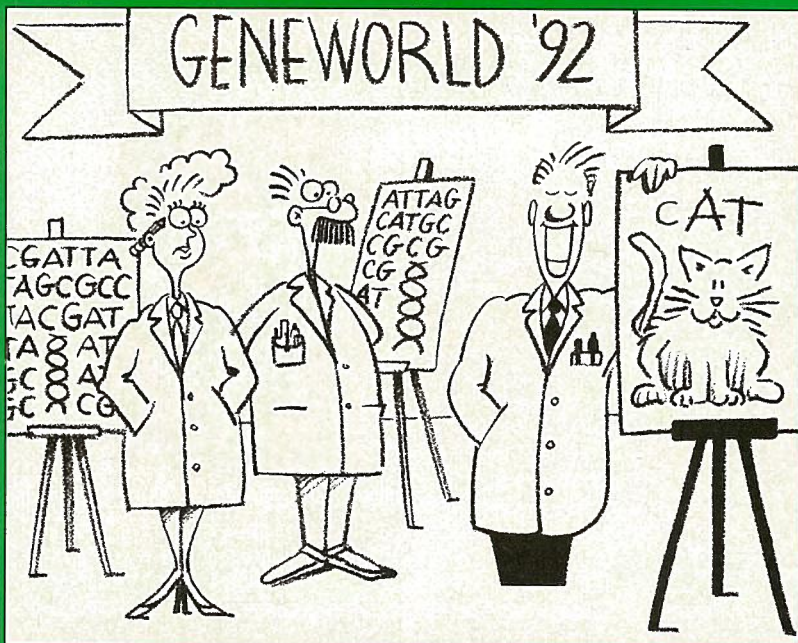
Easy Data for Windows 1.0 (Lakeview Software) is a simple database manager for Microsoft Windows. This inexpensive program is intended for users who have modest data-handling needs, such as keeping track of a name and address file. Reviewer William J. Lynott finds the program easy to install and simple to use. He says it will appeal most to those who don't want the expense of a more sophisticated package and who don't have time to learn a full database management system. GO OLT-3785

Develop Effective Mailing Lists

MarketPlace Business 1.1 (MarketPlace Information Corp.), a CD-ROM program for Macintosh computers, contains detailed information about 7 million U.S. businesses. The program searches the information to build specialized mailing and prospect lists for sales campaigns. The lists can be based on geographical area including specific ZIP codes, type and size of business, and many other criteria. Reviewer Anthony Watkins says the program is simple to use—sometimes too simple. He says despite its high cost, it is an excellent tool for small businesses. GO OLT-3795

Evaluating Securities

Quant IX version 4.0 (Quant IX Software), a portfolio evaluation program for IBM computers, can record investment ac-



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tivity and maintain portfolio records as well as perform investment calculations. Input for the program can be taken from newspapers and journals, or can be downloaded from CompuServe. Reviewer Harry Green says this is a good program for fundamental analysts and as a training aid, but that the awkward user interface makes the program difficult to use. *GO OLT-3825*

Powerful, Inexpensive Word Processing

JustWrite 2.0 (Symantec Corp.), a full-featured word processor for Microsoft Windows, is about half the price of its most popular competition. It includes an outliner, spell checker, thesaurus and complete Windows 3.1 support. Reviewer Franklyn Jones applauds the program for its wide array of features, including a toolbar to which users can add up to four rows of icons and commands. He says JustWrite is an excellent word processor and also can satisfy many desktop publishing requirements.

For more information, visit the Symantec Applications Forum (GO SYMFORUM). To read the review, *GO OLT-3835*.

Improved Style Checker

Grammatik 5 (Reference Software) is a redesigned grammar and style checker in versions for both Microsoft Windows and DOS-based computers. A Macintosh version should be available soon. It supports most major word processors and uses new "Mor-Proof" analysis technology that makes it more accurate and helpful. Users also can write their own style rules to ensure that their writing meets company or government standards. Reviewer James Moran found that this version of Grammatik did a much better job hunting down some errors and suggesting corrections than previous versions. He also found that it has problems with some complex sentences, as do most competing products. *GO OLT-3845*

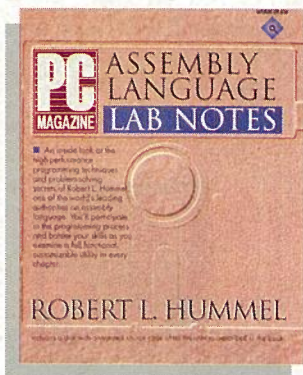
Recover Lost Text

Last Resort (Working Software Inc.) is a utility program for IBM computers that records every keystroke you type. If you lose text that you meant to save because of an equipment failure or your own mistake, your text will be in Last Resort's back-up file waiting for you to recover it. Reviewer William J. Lynott found the program easy to use. He says the program sometimes records more than you need. But he adds that if you lose important text, it is an invaluable program to have running on your computer. *GO OLT-5890*



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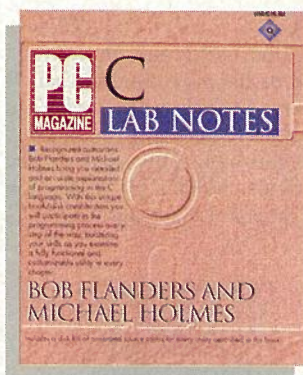
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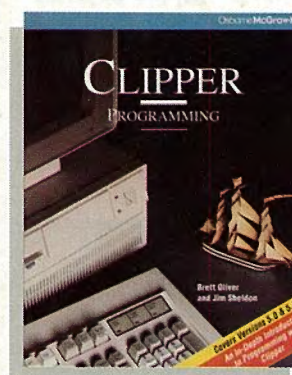
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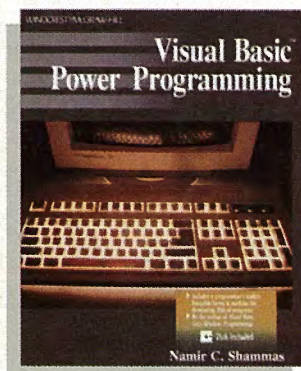
This book/disk set covers ten programming problem-solving utilities, from disk structure cleaning to network productivity boosting. Ziff-Davis \$29.95
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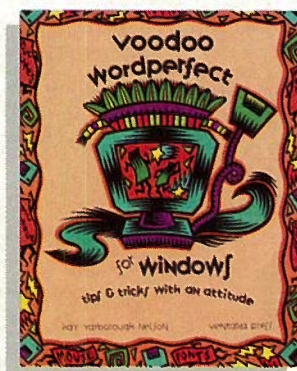
This introductory guide covers everything from programming basics to ways to expand your skills using Clipper 5.0 or 5.01. Osborne/McGraw-Hill \$27.95
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Visual Basic Power Programming

by Namir C. Shamma

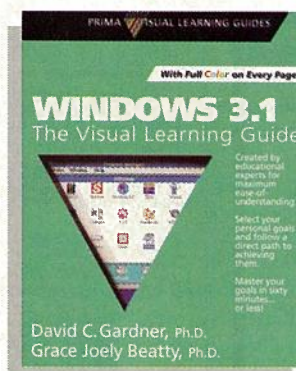
Expand on your knowledge of Visual Basic and move on to more advanced Windows programming with the help of this programmer's toolkit. Windcrest/McGraw-Hill \$29.95
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Voodoo Wordperfect for Windows

by Kay Yarborough Nelson

If WordPerfect for Windows has you bugged or bored, then you need this book of tips and tricks for dealing with difficult or mundane tasks. Ventana Press \$19.95
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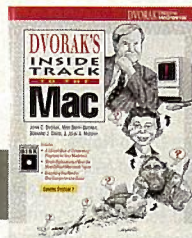
PC/Computing Guide to Shareware

By Preston Gralla

Ziff-Davis Press, 1992

413 pages, \$34.95 (softcover with two diskettes)

If this book were shareware, readers would be happy to send in their fees, says reviewer John Edwards, who praises the author for subjectively singling out the best shareware applications in a number of popular fields, many of which are available in the CompuServe forums. *GO OLT-5210*



Dvorak's Inside Track to the Mac

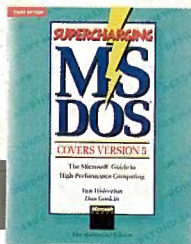
By John Dvorak, Mimi Smith Dvorak,

Bernard David, John Murphy

Osborne/McGraw-Hill 1992

729 pages, \$39.95 (softcover with one diskette)

Calling this book a wonderful overview resource, reviewer Franklyn Jones says it strikes a balance between being fun to read and quite useful for both novice and veteran Macintosh users. *GO OLT-5220*



Supercharging MS-DOS (Third Edition)

By Van Wolvert and Dan Gookin

Microsoft Press, 1991

463 pages, \$24.95 (softcover)

Designed for seasoned computer users who want to make DOS hum like a Ferrari on the Autobahn, this book offers dozens of tricks to make life with DOS easier, says reviewer Robert Sanchez. *GO OLT-5260*

The Winn L. Rosch PC Upgrade Bible

By Winn L. Rosch

Brady Publishing, 1991

621 pages, \$26.95 (softcover)

Now that software can eat as much as 15MB of a hard disk, you might want to consider upgrading your trusty '286. Should you replace the hard disk, change the microprocessor or add more memory? Reviewer Harry Green says this book will help you cut through the hype and decide what you really need. *GO OLT-5240*



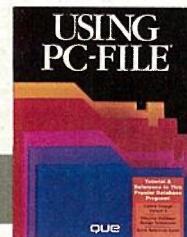
FoxPro 2.0 Power Tools

By Malcolm C. Rubel

Bantam Computer Books, 1991

1,392 pages, \$54.95 (softcover with two diskettes)

With more than 340 utilities on two accompanying diskettes, this book aims to lessen the frustration of programming FoxPro 2.0. Reviewer James Moran calls it a powerful timesaver for any FoxPro user who wants to develop new applications. *GO OLT-5250*



Using PC-File

By Trudi Reisner

Que Corp., 1992

408 pages, \$24.95 (softcover)

Because this book takes a different approach than the manual to teaching PC-File, reviewer Richard A. Danca finds it quite useful. He especially praises the clear screenshots that are easy to read and accurately represent PC-File's not-quite-graphical user interface. *GO OLT-5230*

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U.K. News/Weather/Sports

Grolier Academic American Encyclopedia

Peterson's College Database

HealthNet

The Electronic Mall

Consumer Reports

Classified Ads (read only)

Shopper's Advantage Discount

Shopping Club

Travelshopper—airline, hotel and rental car information and reservations

Department of State

Visa Advisors

Eaasy Sabre reservation system

Basic Current Stock Quotes

Issue/Symbol Reference

Mortgage Calculator

Roger Ebert's Movie Reviews

ShowBizQuiz

Science Trivia Quiz

The Grolier Whiz Quiz

Castle Quest

Black Dragon

Classic Adventure

Enhanced Adventure

Hangman

Support Forums for CompuServe

Information Manager software

Practice Forum

Directory of Members

Ask Customer Service

Current members can convert to the new Standard Pricing Plan at any time. To convert, GO CHOICES.

UPDATE



Hit the Greens in Gaming Tour

Join the CompuServe Golf Association and play computer golf year-round in the Gamers' Forum. Players using Accolade Software's "Jack Nicklaus" program tee off in a tour that visits Augusta, Muirfield, Avenel, Pebble Beach and many other courses. Each tour stop is played offline under a variety of weather conditions that are sure to challenge even the best golfers. For more information about this year's tour, read file CGATOU.RUL in Library 6, "Sports Games." GO GAMERS



DOS CIM 2.05 Now Available

Version 2.05 of the DOS CompuServe Information Manager is now available for downloading from the online upgrade area (GO CIMSOF). This minor maintenance release is the latest in the Version 2 series for computers with hard disks, which features a windowed Executive News Service interface (above). For more information and to download the new version, GO CIMSOF.

The CompuServe Help Forum is open to all members for assistance with or discussion of the CompuServe Information Service. The forum lets members learn how to use CompuServe's various products without incurring extended-service expenses. The Help Forum is free of connect-time charges. GO HELPFORUM

CompuServe will exhibit at the Boston MacWorld Expo, Aug. 4-7. The newest Macintosh versions of CompuServe Information Manager and Navigator will be demonstrated at Booth 1922, Bayside Expo Hall. Discounts on software kits will be available.

A new edition of the **Best of Go Graphics** directory is available. The popular catalog displays more than 2,000 GIF images and lists support programs from the libraries of the Graphics forums, and includes feature articles and a salute to the GIF format's fifth year. To order, GO PRC.

In August, the \$5 scan charge is waived for IQuest's Computer SmartSCANS. Three scans are included: Computer Products and Applications, Computer Science and Technology, and Telecommunications. Use SmartSCANS to search several databases in the selected topic, then retrieve information from the scanned database for an additional charge. GO IQUEST

First-time users of Computer Database Plus will receive up to a \$5 usage credit for surcharges incurred during their first session in August. The database contains more than 250,000 articles from leading computer-industry newspapers and magazines such as *PC Magazine* and *MacUser*. GO COMPDB

The Hewlett-Packard Handhelds Forum is now open, with more than 500 files for popular handhelds such as the HP95LX Palmtop and the complete line of HP calculators. GO HPHAND

CompuServe and Citicorp have joined to bring you Global Report, an online service integrating accurate, timely business and financial information. Use Global Report to easily retrieve real-time foreign exchange information, expert views of market trends, up to six months of historical news on publicly-traded companies and much more. For details, GO GLOREP.

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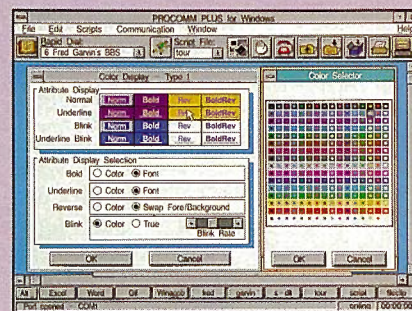
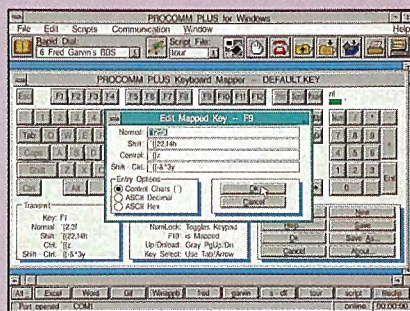


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